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COMMONWEAL

ECUMENISM 1992

THE GRAYMOOR PRIZE

THE BUCK STOPS HERE
Ty Mam Duw Community

THE ALTERNATIVE IS WORSE
Theodore Pulcini

The Burdensome Costs of Victory
PATRICK BARNARD

RICHARD ALLEVA on Black Robe

I'm not a feminist, but...
DAVID R. CARLIN, Jr.

BOOKS
ELIZABETH BEVERLY on Victorian Literature & Theology
DAVID CASTRONOVO on English intellectuals

J. BRYAN HEHIR on James Reston

NOTEBOOK:
Margaret O'Brien Steinfels

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CORRESPONDENCE

Gay marriage: no

Houston, Tex.

To the Editors: These comments respond to your symposium on gay marriage [November 22]:

(1) Standards for controlling the legal extension of marital rights to the unmarried are uncertain. The point is made by the "soft" criteria for defining "family" given by the New York Court of Appeals in a case earlier this year: How long has the relationship endured? What is the quality of the relationship? Is it exclusive? And so on. Under these criteria, polygamy, polyandry, cluster marriages, or any other "arrangement" that comes to mind cannot be forbidden, as long as there are free adults who want it.

(2) The core reason for upholding heterosexual marriages exclusively is that only such a relationship insures the future. The state has little interest in relationships with no families or children—in some countries (and in California) married adults with no children can get a divorce via a notarized postcard. Once children come on the scene the state as agent for society has a tremendous interest because the intergenerational family assures our transition to the future—both that we will have a future, and that the future will be worth having. This is what justifies giving advantages in taxation, Social Security payments, property divisions, various child exemptions, as well as respect, to heterosexual marriages.

(3) Since resources are always scarce, extending economic benefits to strengthen parafamilial institutions would inevitably diminish social support for marriage and the family, this at a time when these core institutions are in crisis. We know that social supports of various kinds, some of them costly, can reduce the incidence of divorce. We know that divorce harms children and that the hurt often persists through their lives. Apart from the initial trauma of divorce, single-parent families—headed by women in about 90 percent of cases—produce severe strains in relationships between children and fathers. Lack of male role models for boys and girls creates serious emotional imbalances and is responsible in no small measure for increased hostility between the sexes. Some divorces are necessary, of course, but most are not. And, while single-parent families must of course be helped in various ways, it should not be by weakening the model of the intergenerational family through equating the paradigm with its failures.

My conclusion is that couples, whether heterosexual or homosexual, who choose to live together without bearing the burden of rearing children, are free to live as they wish with no obstacle from the state or other disability; but they must not ask to be assimilated into the sacrificial paradigm of heterosexual marital relationships with children.

PETER J. RIGA

Gay marriage: yes

Detroit, Mich.

To the Editors: As the female half of a heterosexual marriage and the mother of two young children, I certainly agree with the editors ["The Future of Marriage," November 22] that sexual generativity gives us a "compelling stake in the future." This is my primary reason for approving of same-sex marriages.

Those families in which the children's caretakers are also their biological parents and in which all live together amicably have the leisure to enjoy "the mystery of the other and the joys of human creation." The editors are aware that not all children are so fortunate. From the point of view of the child who does not have the option of living in an ideal family situation and is forced to suffer "haphazard arrangements" for his or her upbringing, there would be no value in denying to prospective adoptive parents the advantages of an officially sanctioned union (in other words, marriage) simply because they are of the same sex.

This is not to "plead neutrality about the value of procreative sexuality." But the fact is that procreative sexuality has presented society with children who need help. It is profoundly counterproductive to those needs when we withhold from a responsible and loving gay couple who would be willing to raise a child any legal or religious support whatsoever that could help them achieve that goal.

To praise "the social goods of the regenerative family" is high-sounding talk. But when that regenerative family cannot or will not take care of its own, it makes little sense to put obstacles in the way of any nonprocreative couple that is eager to love a child.

SUSAN FEENEY

A thousand times no

New York, N.Y.

To the Editors: I was stunned by your editorial in which you call on us to "respect and protect homosexuality as a personal value or choice." Given that premise, I do not see how you can logically conclude that you oppose homosexual marriage. I reject your premise. I support your conclusion.

The homosexual community seeks the right to marry by arguing that they are otherwise denied a share of the economic benefits which follow marriage. In fact, civil and religious marriage impose economic burdens which outweigh the advantages.

(Continued on page 25)

Commonweal is indexed in Reader's Guide to Periodical Literature, Catholic Periodical Index, Index of American Periodical Verse, Book Review Digest and Book Review Index. Microfilm from Vol. 1, 1924, to current issues available through University Microfilm, 300 N. Zeeb Road, Ann Arbor, MI 48106, and on Microfiche from Bell & Howell, Wooster, Ohio 44691. Serials Data program No.: ISSN 0010-3330. Second-class postage paid at New York, N.Y. and at additional offices. Copyright © 1992 Commonweal Foundation. Single Copy, $2. Yearly subscriptions, U.S., $36; Canada, $39; foreign, $41. Special two-year rate: U.S., $62; Canada, $66; foreign, $72. All Canadian and foreign subscriptions must be paid in U.S. dollars by International Money Order or by check on a U.S. bank.

Illustrations: Cover, p. 13, Emil Antonucci; p. 7, William Bennett; pp. 10, 26, Paul Valerry; p. 16, Ty Mam Duw Community; p. 22, Jane Brown.

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COMMONWEAL

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STAFF

Editor: Margaret O'Brien Steinfels
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Senior Writer: Robert G. Hoyt
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Staff: Harriette Balsky, Carmen Alava, Pamela Quatse
Advertising Manager: Ruth E. Taylor
Publisher: Edward S. Skillin

Unsolicited manuscripts are welcome but cannot be considered or returned unless accompanied by a stamped, self-addressed envelope.

Commonweal, [ISSN 0010-3330] A Review of Public Affairs, Religion, Literature, and the Arts, is published biweekly, except monthly Christmas, New Year's and July and August, by Commonweal Foundation, 15 Dutch St., New York, N.Y. 10038. Telephone: (212) 732-0800. Display advertising correspondence should be sent to Ruth E. Taylor, 11 Graffam Rd., So. Portland, Me. 04106 (207) 799-4387, classified advertising correspondence to 15 Dutch St. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to Commonweal, 15 Dutch St. New York, N.Y. 10038.

State of the world

Foreign policy, like charity, begins at home. That is the one sturdy arrow of truth in Pat Buchanan's campaign quiver, otherwise stocked with jingoistic and xenophobic campaign darts. What the United States *should* do in the world, whether on its own behalf or for the sake of global peace, order, and prosperity, depends on what it *can* do. And that depends in turn on a great many factors, from economic strength to political wisdom and political will.

In the Gulf War the U.S. demonstrated that it can still do a lot of harm in a hurry—against a fourth-rate power and with the help of lots of yen, marks, pounds, francs, riyals, and dinars to pay the bills. The war demonstrated as well that this country is now the world's sole *military* superpower; the former Soviet Union, because it is former, has resigned from the club. Paradoxically, however, our newly absolute military supremacy brings this country not more but less in the way of political clout. As long as the Soviets had or were perceived to have enough troops and weapons to smash their way into Western Europe, or to pulverize Japan, or (through proxies) to achieve hegemony in, say, the Persian Gulf or the Middle East—and as long as enough of the right kinds of people believed that Soviet power might in fact be used for these ends—the counter-balancing power of the U.S. was indispensable, and the U.S. itself was not merely influential but dominant in "the West."

It's always possible, of course, that another rogue leader like Saddam Hussein will set a course that threatens important Western interests, economic or political or both, but the possibility isn't enough of a likelihood to require continued European or Japanese deference to U.S. policy choices—especially since, if such a threat rises, and is credible to us and to them, they and we can cope again.

As military superpower, then, the U.S. is more or less out of a job; nobody's writing scenarios for the world stage that include such a role. Meantime, as Patrick Barnard points out in an article in this issue (pp. 9-11), our latest military spending spree, coupled with Ronald Reagan's voodoo economics, has sharply reduced our economic standing. The world's biggest creditor nation is suddenly its biggest debtor. Deregulatory folly has wasted the savings and loan industry, put the banking system at risk, and laden the U.S. Treasury with unprecedented new burdens. Because of governmental failure to invest in infrastructure and "human assets," along with corporate mismanagement that has amassed improbable debt totals while aiming at next-quarter profits, the country lags in productivity, and outpaces its competitors only in the size of its trade imbalance. In consequence of all this, those Americans who raised their index fingers in triumph at the close of the Gulf War ("we're No. 1!") were not seeing the real world.

This is a seismic shift, and its implications are not easy to grasp. Certainly it is

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a great blessing, maybe the best thing that has happened in this bloody century, that the possibility of global nuclear war is so greatly diminished. The loss of its preeminent political power is a small price for the U.S. to pay in return. But, though Armageddon has been rescheduled, the planet has hardly become a safe neighborhood. We have not entered Valhalla, or reinvented the Garden of Eden. Terrible events can still rise out of the unresolved hostilities on view in the Middle East, Yugoslavia, the new Eurasian commonwealth—to name only some of the regions most visibly threatened or already ruled by large-scale and contagious violence. And there are other, less obviously "political" problems demanding attention from the world community that *may* be aborning. Tragic consequences—mass starvation, '30s-style global depression, Hiroshima- or Dresden-scale massacres, planetary poisoning—can follow from a failure of the nations in concert to adjust the terms of international trade prudently and fairly, to strengthen our fledgling mechanisms for peacekeeping and conflict resolution, and to address such issues as nuclear proliferation, transnational pollution, deforestation, the booming trade in ever more deadly arms, the growth of megacorporations that do business in many countries and are accountable to none: issues dismissed as hokum by the newly resurgent isolationists among us, and most of which are ignored or downplayed in President George Bush's vaguely defined "new world order."

It happens, however, that Americans are being forced to reconceive geopolitics at the very moment when the critical character of our own economic and social ills has become visible even in the White House. That creates a strong temptation to pretend that the U.S. no longer has interests to defend and obligations to fulfill beyond its borders—and to build political campaigns and careers on that pretense. Buchanan put it most bluntly in the title of an article: "America First—and Second and Third." There were strong echoes of the same theme in the successful senatorial campaign of Pennsylvania's Harris Wofford, a Democrat: "It's time to take care of our own." The same echoes are heard in the campaign rhetoric deployed on the left by Iowa's Tom Harkin and at right of center by Virginia's L. Douglas Wilder, whose campaign slogan, "Put America First," is simply warmed-over Buchanan. These and other Democratic aspirants for the presidency, along with maverick Republican David Duke, are attacking George Bush not on the substance of his foreign policy, where he is indeed vulnerable, but simply for *having* a foreign policy.

It's perfectly true that the current state of the economy reflects something worse than the bottom stage of the business cycle, that we urgently need to turn the economy around, and that doing so will require a massive shift in our deployment of resources. It is not true that we can afford to pull in our horns and let the rest of the world go to hell. No one nation can protect the ozone layer or prevent the poisoning of the seas and the air around us. No one nation can dictate the terms of world trade. Our smart bombs, our nukes and missiles cannot coerce the Serbs, Slovenians, and Croats into a settlement of their murderous conflict, nor prevent its spread. And so on. Easy proclamations to the contrary, it should be added, are not only subversive of American interests but contrary to the best in the American character and in the traditions of the Democratic party. Campaigning

All you need to know to thrive in '92

You were born at the right time and now live in the proper place to grow in love and prepare for a new and better life.

If the cost of surgery proposed for you is exorbitant, the clinic will, for a modest fee, touch up your X-ray.

Hurry to tell your mother she is beautiful.

Hide from persons telling you the dog will not bite, or aching to broadcast their own poems.

Risks are involved in taking the initiative. If you do not gamble, you may, alas, become an efficient manager.

Forgive an offender before an apology is offered.

Loneliness is a sacerdotal hazard. Celibacy severely imposed is anachronistic and cataclysmic.

Fresh flowers on your desk will sweeten your disposition.

You will realize this chapter of your life is getting slim on pages when everyone tells you how well you appear.

No one knows when human life begins.

The louder you talk the less credible you will be.

A yawn is permitted when an unenlightened committee member will change neither his mind nor the subject.

Do not worry if you cannot remember what was said at a cocktail party.

Write specific directives for your funeral. Give a copy to every member of your family. Some grief will be lessened.

Indifference to others is probably the greatest sin.

Pick up scraps of paper. Global housekeepers are needed.

If everything is coming your way, you are probably in the wrong lane. Adversity is more conducive to contemplation than prosperity.

You cannot travel onward and upward alone. Don't try.

Before you slow down, read three great novels: *The Power and the Glory* (Graham Greene), *Brideshead Revisited* (Evelyn Waugh), and *One Hundred Years of Solitude* (Gabriel Marquez).

War is insane, expensive, often inconclusive, and usually immoral.

As you read the obituaries, notice how many persons at your exact age are being buried this week. Travel light.

Created things change forms but are never annihilated. Every person will continue to live forever.

HARVEY F. EGAN

Harvey F. Egan, pastor emeritus of St. Joan of Arc Church in Minneapolis, is the author of Leaven *(North Star Press).*

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PAGE, DATE, & VERSE

Starting with this issue—January 17, 1992—*Commonweal* will number each separate issue beginning at "Page 1." Thus, our annual index (published in the final issue of each calendar year), will list all articles, editorials, and reviews with issue dates as well as page numbers. We hope this change will assist readers, researchers, and librarians alike.

against foreign aid for humanitarian purposes and for development (a tiny slice of the budget, a mere 0.24 percent of GNP) slides easily into a campaign against foreigners—and then against those Americans who also need and deserve our compassion and help, and who are "different"—i.e., poor, black, Latino. Steven Kelman, who teachs public policy at Harvard, points out in the *Washington Post National Weekly* (December 16-22) that Douglas Wilder himself belongs to the American ethnic group that suffers most when mean-spirited scapegoating crowds out intelligent generosity. Tom Harkin betrays his own past when he adds a note of jingoism to his protectionist program on world trade. Teaching Americans that they don't have to care—*should not* care—about the hundreds of millions on the planet who know hunger and suffer oppression is a prescription for another kind of political and social disaster.

Fortunately, the new multipolar world that replaces the U.S.-Soviet duopoly does confer benefits besides relief from nuclear fear. We no longer need to buy allies around the world with huge infusions of arms and other military support for the sake of containing communism. We can very greatly reduce the deployment of U.S. troops and gear to protect Western Europe and Southeast Asia. We can swear off interventionist adventures in Latin America and the Caribbean. We can sharply reduce spending on maintenance of our overstuffed nuclear forces, and immediately cancel ongoing plans for developing new nuclear weapons systems, plans that no longer have a rational end-in-view but will cost hundreds of billions of dollars if continued.

We do need an adequate defense. We do not need overkill capacity. We do not need (and can never have) enough "defense" forces to police the world. It follows that the level of unnecessary military expenditures we are now maintaining constitutes a massive diversion of resources—not just tax money but brainpower, technology, time, attention, raw materials—to nonproductive purposes. Unlike schools, roads, machine tools, the instruments of war are pure consumption: every tank, bomber, warship over the level of need is pure waste, and every excess dollar taken from the Pentagon and given to education, civilian R&D, preventive medical care, infrastructure, and the like is pure gain. At the moment we are prevented from achieving such gains by the budget agreement of October 1990, which precluded shifting resources from military to civilian needs; it's a tourniquet around the national neck, but until recently it received from the administration and many in Congress rather more respect than the Constitution.

That can change and indeed may. Given the new situation in the world, given the assets the United States still commands—rich and varied resources, a vast market, political stability, a numerous people—the policy choices now available constitute an unparalleled opportunity. Seizing the opportunity will be a difficult political and managerial task; as Patrick Barnard writes, it will entail some risks and cause some painful disruptions. Refusing it will commit us to long-term decline—and who knows what else?

Despite Barnard's pessimism about the likely outcome, our hope is that the presidential campaign now lurching onward will force candidates, commentators, and voters to examine the options with clear eyes. Perhaps the greatest danger is that candidates in search of sound bites will propose new "us-against-them" approaches to both domestic and foreign policy, blaming Japan or Germany or the European community for made-in-America problems, dismissing desperately poor nations as hopeless basket cases, pretending that it's now a unipolar rather than polycentric world, dreaming up new dangers to justify feeding the gargantuan appetites of the military-industrial complex. We are condemned to live in interesting times; the campaign will reveal whether we will be blessed with interesting leaders.

NOTEBOOK

MARIO...PLEASE

A SPECIAL OFFER FROM COMMONWEAL

The glum faces of my dinner partners after Governor Mario Cuomo's no-go press conference said it all: Mind you, not everyone was a Cuomo enthusiast, but there was deep regret for the campaign-that-might-have-been.

Until December 20, I thought Cuomo had been running a brilliant non-campaign campaign—giving the press a hard time; twitting George Bush about his no-show trip to Japan; and, by keeping New York State's budget impasse in the news, highlighting the need for federal revenue reallocation. I had gotten so used to the "fact" that Cuomo was really running, I had a list of issues, pitfalls, and correctives we would have addressed to the one candidate who publicly admits to reading *Commonweal*.

Not everyone is an ardent fan of the governor's philosophical musings and combative style; too thin-skinned, they say. Some doubted he could have taken the Democratic nomination; he'll never play in Omaha, they claim. Not everyone felt that, if elected, he could run the country. Could he sidestep the slings and arrows of being a sitting target (the noncandidate candidate that some in the press love to hate seems to invite a daily political roasting)? Cuomo clearly does not inspire the passionate and sometimes blind adulation accorded JFK or more recently Ronald Reagan, not from the press not from his constituents.

Cuomo offers something else—and this is what was reflected

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in the regrets of our dinner table conversation—something this country needs now: intelligence, integrity, the capacity for dispassionate analysis, and a readiness to think politically about how he got to where he stands—on jobs, on moral character, on welfare, on the cosmos, on capital punishment, on teenage pregnancies, on abortion, on running for president. He's not always right (his views on the law and abortion will need rethinking after the Supreme Court either overthrows or further limits Roe v. Wade); nonetheless he's a political man bent on persuading and convincing people by reason and not by trickery. This would be an improvement in a presidential candidate. (I also count it as a plus that the Cuomos' live in one house, the Executive Mansion in Albany—a small symbol of the modestly normal in a country where recent presidents have several when so many Americans have none.)

Though some in the media find his thinking-out-loud and thinking-on-his-feet deeply irritating, those who believe politics involves more than image management find his candor and quickness engaging and useful. Thinking and talking politics is what presidential campaigns, at least in part, used to be about (cf. Truman, Kennedy, Humphrey-Nixon, and Carter). It would have been one of the virtues of a Cuomo campaign, especially now that George Bush says he's ready for a "dog-eat-dog fight." (Where does this man get his metaphors?)

There were other virtues to a Cuomo campaign. His political and oratorical skills would have forced his fellow Democrats to sharpen theirs; they could use it. Had Cuomo won the Democratic nomination, George Bush would have been forced to address in substance, and not slogans, some pressing issues: rising unemployment, decaying infrastructure, long-term economic growth, reallocation of national resources from the cold war to the new world order, and yes—still and once again—education of the young.

But issues aren't our only problem. We need to come to some national consensus on how to see and judge them. Cuomo has the political skill to expose the bankruptcy of at least some of the conservative and some of the liberal responses that aren't working. Demonstrably he has the political guts to point out how little real difference there is, in practice, between the Democratic and Republican agendas as they are played out in Washington. Cuomo probably could not have produced another revolution of political reordering on the scale of FDR or Ronald Reagan, but his words, his ideas, his command of rhetoric would have given us a common language for talking about the combination of structural change and moral renewal that we need at this moment in our history.

There may be nothing very useful about making the declared noncandidate the repository of one's hopes for the 1992 campaign. Nor are there easy ways out of our economic drift and political paralysis, not from Cuomo, not from any of the candidates. But it would have been a better campaign were he part of it. We would have ended, no matter who won, with a more sober sense than is now likely of what's wrong. That is better than nothing, than more drift, more paralysis, more bombast.

Mario Cuomo apparently did not need to run for president, but the country needed him to run. *Commonweal* expects a lot of its subscribers.

Governor Cuomo: Change your mind. We'll extend your subscription for four more years.

MARGARET O'BRIEN STEINFELS

WORLD WATCH

J. Bryan Hehir

JAMES RESTON

MELLOW CALVINIST

James Reston, the dean of American journalists, has performed a signal public service in writing *Deadline: A Memoir* (Random House, $25, 452 pp.), recounting his fifty years at the *New York Times*. For the current generation of Americans likely to see life in Washington through the lens of Watergate, Irangate, the savings and loan scandal, and the Thomas-Hill hearing, Reston provides a resounding counter-example. Here is a life lived at the center of Washington power and politics not dominated by either.

In direct and elegant prose, Reston traces a career shaped by the major events and personalities of the last fifty years: World War II, Yalta, the founding of the United Nations, Churchill and De Gaulle, ten presidents, and the close circle of those who shaped the thinking of presidents, prime ministers, and the reading public: Walter Lippmann, Arthur Krock, Jean Monnet, Dean Acheson, and Henry Kissinger. Reston began his career reporting World War II, spent most of it interpreting the cold war for readers of the *Times*, and lived to write the obituary of the Soviet empire. It's all here in 500 pages as readable as the column he wrote for thirty years. But these events are not the "big picture," rather it is the way Reston interweaves historical events with his narrative of family, faith, and philosophy that are part of his story of the United States and its role in the world.

The thread that holds Reston's autobiography together is his relationship with Sally Fulton Reston, his wife of sixty years. "My wife Sally not only provided the story for this book but had to jolly it along for a couple of years and even help edit it at the end....She is in no way to blame for the final result, but with no Sally, no book." This customary author's exculpation of oth-

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ers cannot be applied here, because on page after page Sally Reston is counselor, companion, and mainstay of the family. I am not sure how this will go down in an age shaped by different conceptions of male/female roles, but it is hard to criticize the results of the Restons' relationship. Sally Reston comes through as at least an equal partner in a professional and familial story that beat the odds of the Washington pressure cooker. For almost twenty years, I have had both pastoral and professional contact with a variety of men and women who have struggled to balance a career and family responsibilities in Washington. The toll is often very high. Most people try it for the life of an administration or perhaps a decade; some make it for twenty years; the Restons carried it off for half a century. To be sure there were financial and other support systems that others would never dream of, but the story of this marriage is still a remarkable testimony of hope.

One dimension of the familial narrative is its strong intergenerational character. Reston records the powerful influence of both his and Sally's parents at several points. Even at eighty, he remembers his father in a way which is as powerful as it is poignant: "I was never able to achieve his redemptive faith, though I tried, but he has lived every day in my memory. I wake sometimes in the night hearing his voice, or when walking alone, particularly at Fiery Run in Virginia, suddenly I think I see him at my side."

That reference points to a second theme of *Deadline*, one I suppose I am vocationally predisposed to reflect on. Reston confesses to a gap between his own faith and the sturdy Calvinist conviction of his parents, but it is clear from this memoir that his struggle to believe bore its own fruit. I remember Reston often invoking in his columns Abraham Lincoln's dictum that "we are devoid of faith and terrified by our skepticism." Reston's life reads as one rooted in faith, but disciplined by its struggles with skepticism. His profession prides itself on its secularity, and he worked a beat in a city which seldom sustains faith but often tests it. *Deadline* tells the story of a man who did not simply maintain his faith in stern surroundings, but used the perspective of faith to interpret the world events that were part of his daily work.

Reston seems a mellow Calvinist: schooled in the story of Original Sin, he was hardly surprised by the follies of history; but he came through it all with a fundamentally optimistic reading of human nature and the human story.

In a fleeting but fascinating aside, he comments on Lippmann's view of religion—where skepticism did seem to triumph—and he tells the reader how he pursued the issue during Lippmann's final illness. Later on, Phil Graham, publisher of the *Washington Post*, came to discuss religion with Reston in the days just before Graham's tragic suicide. Of this encounter Reston writes: "He seemed to think that I could provide spiritual guidance, but I'm afraid my faith was not strong enough to help."

Family and faith sustained the private Reston, but most readers will be drawn to *Deadline* because the public Reston has been so much a part of our world. The book describes a series of positions Reston held at the *Times*, but most readers knew him through the column that appeared from 1953-1987 (and occasionally since then). From this platform he exercised an influence unlike that of any other journalist save Lippmann. David Halberstam (*The Powers That Be*), in comparing the two, described Reston as the dominant reporter of his era and Lippmann as its public philosopher. In a 1959 essay, Reston contrasted Lippmann's life with the rest of the Washington press corps, seeing him as a man who maintained "a duality of engagement in the world of public affairs and disengagement from the world of affairs into the world of books and political philosophy, of reason and meditation on ultimate values." Halberstam's distinction is sound, but too absolute for my tastes. Reston was a superb reporter—two Pulitzers testify to that—but he possessed a public philosophy that provided continuity to the hundreds of columns he wrote on America and its role in the world.

The columns cut across the fabric of American public life in both its domestic and foreign dimensions, but the focus was an effort to interpret America's postwar role to the administrations who passed through Reston's home city and the public that elected them. *Deadline* recounts this history thematically to a degree, but most strikingly in a series of perceptive portraits. The Reston style is never mean or vindictive but it is clear whom he respected and whom he did not. Roosevelt, Eisenhower, and Carter do well; Dulles and Reagan do not; Kissinger gets a mixed assessment.

The person who comes through the book with unqualified praise is Jean Monnet, the mind behind the European Community. It is a commentary on the uniqueness of Reston's own vision that this "reporter" pays most attention to a man who thought in terms of decades rather than daily headlines, a man who did not hold public office but conceived of new kinds of institutions for others to run. Reston obviously admired Monnet's vision and his indominable drive and optimism, but he also highlights a personal view of Monnet's, his distinction between "those who want to be somebody and those who want to do something." Monnet's friend, James Reston, has given us a life that combines both dimensions. What Reston did was strikingly important; who he is dominates this very good book.

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OF SEVERAL MINDS David R. Carlin, Jr.

'I'M NOT A FEMINIST, BUT...'

GOOD POLITICS, ERSATZ RELIGION

"I'm not a feminist, but...." These words drive feminists up the wall. Understandably so. The women who typically say them agree with all the points on the feminist agenda, or at least almost all of them. They agree that women are treated unfairly in the workplace and elsewhere; they support the goal of equality of opportunity regardless of sex; they applaud the opening of previously all-male occupations to women; they believe more day care for children should be provided by government and industry; for the most part they favor keeping abortion legal. And yet they refuse to take the last step—the apparently logical step—of declaring themselves to be feminists. Instead they make it very clear that their endorsement of the feminist agenda is not an endorsement of feminism.

Why this illogic? Indeed, why this ingratitude? For ingratitude it seems to be when women accept the gains won for them by feminists, then shout out loud and clear that they would not be caught dead being feminists themselves.

I think there are at least three reasons.

First, for a small but conspicuous number of feminists, feminism is an alibi for the chronic anger they carry about with them. They happen to be angry with men—though one suspects that if men did not exist, women of this type would be angry about something else. As they understand the ideology of feminism, it legitimates this wrath; hence it legitimates their personalities. Women who in some other era might have been disagreeable grouches are now promoted to the rank of persons who see deeper into the heart of things than their sisters.

It has to be admitted, I fear, that men form a plausible target for this anger. As a statistical class, we leave something to be desired, especially in our younger years. Young men have poor driving records, poor police records, and poor drinking records; not to mention poor records for getting women pregnant, then leaving them high and dry with the kids while moving on to fresh woods and new pastures. The typical male has his strong points, but he is not Nature's moral masterpiece.

Small wonder chronically angry women turn anti-male. But small wonder too that the vast majority of women—who have husbands, brothers, sons, fathers, etc.—are repelled rather than attracted by this androphobic feminism.

Second, for many feminists, though by no means for all, feminism is a kind of ersatz religion. For such women feminism is not just one thing among many in their lives. It is the center; it is that which gives meaning and purpose; that which justifies. It is the source of their salvation. In short, it is their religion.

Secular religions are potentially dangerous things, since they confuse two orders of being and set loose in this poor lower world vast eschatological demands. Witness communism and nazism, the two most notorious secular religions of the twentieth century. But feminism is nothing like either of those. As secular religions go, it is relatively benign. And in the religion-poor world of modernity, a world in which meaning and purpose are not easily come by, who can blame women fortunate enough to discover feminism as a religion?

At the same time, who can blame other women put off by this? Some people prefer their religion neat, not as an ingredient in a secular cocktail. Women who prefer the religion found in churches and synagogues might be drawn to feminism as a political program; but they recoil from feminism as a mode of salvation.

Finally, the great majority of professed feminists in America subscribe to the general philosophy with which many women feel profoundly uncomfortable—a philosophy wider than feminism but which includes it and informs it. It is difficult to find a name for this philosophy. Its proponents call it liberalism; but those of us who are attached to an older variety of liberalism are reluctant to concede the new usage, thereby renouncing our right to the word. Whatever it should be called, this philosophy holds that moral values are subjective (matters of pure personal choice); that one person's values (choices) are therefore just as good as the next person's; and that all values should be equally tolerated.

From this it follows that there can be no common moral code for society and no common good. It also follows that society, acting through its collective agencies of government, has no reason to prefer marriage to other sexual relationships; no reason to prefer stability in marrriage to divorce; no reason to prefer the nuclear family to other forms of family (or "family"); no reason to prefer in-wedlock births to out-of-wedlock births; and no reason to prefer heterosexual marriage to homosexual "marriage."

I do not say that the average nonfeminist woman has a clear perception of the contents of this philosophy; for that matter, I don't even say that the average feminist has a clear perception of it. But I do say that the average feminist subscribes to this philosophy, whether clearly or confusedly; and I say also that the average nonfeminist woman has at least some intuitive knowledge of the nature of this philosophy—sufficient knowledge to reject it as the enemy of values on which she has staked her life.

Thus there is nothing illogical about a woman saying, "I'm not a feminist, but...." On the contrary, it is perfectly logical to separate the beneficial political program of feminism from the lethal cultural package it comes wrapped in.

Nor is this an act of ingratitude. After all, gratitude for the good deeds of our benefactors does not oblige us to embrace their follies. Even if it can be shown, as it probably can be, that the wisdom of Washington, Jefferson, and Madison was an integral part of a social-cultural package that included the plantation system, it would not follow that the abolition of slavery was an act of ingratitude to the Founding Fathers.

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THE BURDENSOME COSTS OF 'VICTORY'

PATRICK BARNARD

THE WORLD THAT CAME IN FROM THE COLD WAR

Although political communities have experienced tension throughout history, the very largest structures of world power only change infrequently. The recent collapse of the Soviet bloc, and now of the USSR itself, clearly indicates that we are living at just such a singular time.

Among ordinary people, global shifts of authority inspire a sense of anxiety. And, in the Western tradition, a sure sign of momentous transition is the millennial language which invariably accompanies it. In 40 B.C., the poet Virgil, sensing that Rome was building a renewed empire from the chaos of civil war, wrote the famous lines of his *Fourth Eclogue*: "Now comes the last epoch of prophecy/Now the great order of the ages is born anew." We recognize the phrase today because it appears on the dollar bill, in the motto of the Great Seal of the United States which describes 1776 as *Novus ordo seculorum*, "A New Order of the Ages."

On October 1, 1990, when President George Bush was constructing the international coalition which eventually fought Iraq, he went before the General Assembly of the United Nations to proclaim the emergence of a "new world order." Practically, the formula meant that the five permanent members of the Security Council would act together against Baghdad. At a more abstract level, Bush's explicitly millennial proclamation of a "new age" attempted to encapsulate the massive change sweeping the globe and to put the United States in the position of actively leading this historical transformation. It is doubtful that the president's speech-writers were thinking of Virgil or even the greenback. More likely, they had Woodrow Wilson in mind, and his crusade earlier this century for a renewed international dispensation following World War I.

President Bush certainly cannot be slighted for a lack of grandeur in his UN address, since the scale of the process now underway is enormous. With the eclipse of power in the Kremlin, the United States does stand alone, the "first among equals," for the time being empowered to undertake unimpeded initiatives.

Why then does the announcement of a "new world order" seem tenuous, even hollow? Quite simply, because Woodrow Wilson's campaign for the New Diplomacy—to take the most obvious comparison—occurred when the United States was becoming the world's economic powerhouse after a period of unprecedented commercial development in the nineteenth century. In 1992, however, the United States finds itself in a radically different economic position from the one which it occupied in either 1920 or 1950.

Over the last generation, the U.S. share of the world GNP has fallen from 40 percent to approximately 22 percent, and the country faces problems connected with an aging infrastructure, insufficient public investment, increased private and government debt, huge trade imbalances, declining real wages, and diminished expectations. The rhetoric of a "new world order" does not square with this domestic reality. Internationally, an economically weakened United States, even if that slippage is relative, cannot turn back the clock a hundred years. In the long run, the country cannot afford to play the role of the single superpower as Britain did at the end of the nineteenth century, when the British Navy patrolled the waters of the Western Hemisphere, allowing the U.S. to spend less than 1 percent of its GNP on defense.

Today it is Japan which spends 1 percent of its GNP on its armed forces, while the United States remains stuck in the job of global policeman. Because civilian investment creates a much higher multiplier effect in a national economy than does military expenditure, the more the United States acts as the world's military specialist, the further it stands to lose the economic weight underlying its leadership.

Since 1800, there have been three major periods which have been demarcated by shifts in the very largest structures of global power: the post-Napoleonic era dominated by Britain; the troubled interregnum of Europe's modern civil war which lasted from 1914 to 1945; and the bipolar regime of the cold war, characterized by U.S. economic pre-eminence. We are now in the fourth period of great change, and so far it has all the characteristics of an interregnum, rather than a really new era.

One result is brutally clear: The cold war is finished between the United States and what was once the Soviet Union. But the heralding of a "new world order" promotes a misleading inter-

PATRICK BARNARD *is a Canadian journalist specializing in international affairs. He has contributed to the* Nation *and* Newsday *as well as* Commonweal.

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pretation of events. Washington's triumphalism assumes that the cold war resembled a boxing match: The Soviet opponent passed out, leaving the surviving winner in indisputable possession of the prize. The more somber truth, however, is that the cold war was part of a global network of dual power, shared by both Washington and Moscow. The breaking up of the Soviet Union has really signaled the end of that old duopoly, and not merely the disappearance of Moscow's influence alone. What has fallen apart has been a symbiotic system of power-sharing exercised by two players, and although only one of the contestants is mortally wounded at present, Washington too will ultimately be affected by the erosion of the previous structure.

Despite enormous differences between the United States and the former Soviet Union, their geopolitical competition since 1945 had a serious impact on both countries. The most evident shared characteristic derived from the cold war was the militarization of the two economies.

There was a common logic to the arms race that clearly tied the policies of the superpowers together. Since the U.S. possessed twice, perhaps even three times, the GNP of the USSR, every percentage point rise in American defense expenditure forced the Soviets—if they wished to match the outlay with an absolute dollar equivalent of their production—to devote at least double the proportion of their total output to the military. In practice, the Soviets did not invariably respond in this way. But quite apart from the stresses on Moscow, the cold-war strategy of continually raising the ante permanently distorted the U.S. economy, so that by the middle of the Reagan years Washington was spending more than 6 percent of its GNP on the military. Meanwhile, the Japanese, devoting 1 percent of their yen GNP to defense in recent times, have enjoyed *a 5 percent advantage over the U.S. in funds channeled to civilian investment*, an edge which has accumulated with the speed of compound interest.

To anticipate the future is hazardous, but the dramatic conclusion of the cold war does yield clues about what lies ahead. We can now look back at the structures of the past to see how they cohered, to estimate the cost which the United States paid to win this competition, and to observe those influences, still ongoing today, which helped end the dual system of U.S.-Soviet power. Like the fossil record of a dead organism, the details of the cold war lie spread out before us: The still-present reasons for its extinction are those trends which will shape the future.

The cold war coalesced around the idea, and the fact, of a bipolar world. This system of controlled antagonism fell apart because multipolarity—in communications, education, in the diffusion of technique and capital—made the monopolization of authority, especially by the Soviet Union, a practical impossibility. (By 1956, an Italian Communist, Palmiro Togliatti, had given a name to the multipolar tendency at work within the framework of the cold war. He called it "polycentrism" which he thought was transforming the structure of the world.) Both superpowers have been fundamentally changed by the diffusion of economic and political influence, the Soviet Union drastically so, and the United States in a far more subtle way.

For the American side of the story, the post-1945 period divides into three distinct phases: Cold War I; the end of dollar supremacy in 1971; and the initiation of Cold War II under Ronald Reagan. Slowly but surely, over this period, a dollar-led world has split into the three rival centers of North America, Western Europe, and Japan and Southeast Asia. Furthermore, the differentiation, since 1973, has taken place against a background of stagnation rather than expansion.

Cold War I began in 1947, when Dean Acheson (then undersecretary, later secretary of state) led the team of policy managers who built the strategy for American participation in the superpower competition. During February and March of that year, Acheson forcefully outlined the following argument to President Harry S. Truman and the leaders of Congress: After 1945, Acheson asserted, the world had arrived at a situation not experienced since Rome and Carthage struggled with each other in antiquity, an unprecedented polarization of world power between the United States and the Soviet Union; the British Empire, which sheltered U.S. economic development in the nineteenth century, had collapsed; the U.S., said Acheson, had to assume the old British role of assuring stability by confronting the Soviet challenge in Europe, Asia, and Africa. For Acheson and his colleagues, as he later wrote, the fundamental assumption was "that the whole world structure and order that we inherited from the nineteenth century was gone and that the struggle to replace it would be directed from two bitterly opposed and ideologically irreconcilable power centers."

The bipolar logic of Cold War I took on an altogether new intensity in 1950, when Paul Nitze, the chief of the Policy Planning Staff at the State Department, drew up the ultrasecret document, NSC-68—National Security Memorandum No. 68. NSC-68 began by echoing Acheson's view of the bipolar distribution of power following World War II. Then the memorandum called for the massive militarization of the U.S. economy,

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arguing that the United States, in an emergency, could even afford to increase defense expenditure up to a level of 20 percent of GNP. Policymakers who wrote the document combined the case for rearmament with Keynesian economics, pointing out that increased public spending on the military would boost aggregate demand and make up for unused industrial capacity. The aim, bluntly stated in NSC-68, was that the U.S. should build "superior aggregate military strength" at its end of the "opposite poles of power" in the world, in order to "foster the seeds of destruction within the Soviet system."

Two months after the submission of NSC-68, the Korean War broke out. The United States more than doubled its defense expediture, from more than 4 percent to above 10 percent of GNP (and an eventual high of 13.4 percent in 1953), while the USSR increased its military budget in dollar terms by a third. The cold war was truly off and running. But by far the most important effect of NSC-68 was that military spending became the only form of public investment which had any legitimacy for the national political leadership of the U.S. Military Keynesianism crushed rival claims for nonprivate investment; worse, its abuses gave public-sector activity a bad name.

Two foreign wars occurred in this first phase of the cold war, and by the middle of the Vietnam conflict, U.S. economic competitiveness had begun to suffer. An excess of dollars had flowed overseas unmatched by American goods for foreigners to purchase. On August 15, 1971, President Richard Nixon unilaterally ended the convertibility of the U.S. dollar into gold, and effectively initiated the era of floating exchange rates and intense trade friction in which we still live. Nixon's bold, *de facto* devaluation of the dollar was meant to deal with problems posed particularly by the Japanese economic success and a 1971 U.S. merchandise trade deficit of $2.3 billion. Most economists applauded. Professor Paul Samuelson's immediate public reaction was typical: "Can any informed person expect that a market, even so large a one as the American, would be capable of absorbing the tremendous increment of exports which the Japanese miracle has been spewing forth on the world?" Dollar supremacy had come to a close.

Cold War II, the third phase of the post-1945 period, began with the election of Ronald Reagan, who had been partly sponsored by the Committee on the Present Danger headed by such veteran figures as Paul Nitze. Within a very short time, "voodoo economics" (George Bush's description when he opposed the first Reagan nomination) had produced a bizarre mixture of policies: increased defense expenditure, severe reductions in public programs, tax cuts, and doses of monetarism. The overall effect was to shift huge amounts of money from the civil to the military side of the public sector, to redistribute income upwards, and to severely weaken aggregate demand over the long haul. Reaganism also created enormous twin deficits, making the U.S. a net debtor nation for the first time since the 1890s. Nixon's 1971 trade deficit of $2.3 billion had exploded and under Reagan lodged itself permanently at over $100 billion. By this measure, the trade problem described years before by Samuelson had amplified, allowing for inflation, by a factor of at least ten.

At the end of the cold war, then, what economic reality looms large under the lofty clouds of geopolitics? The stark answer is the condition which the strategic analyst Edward Luttwak calls the "third worldization" of the United States. The list of indicators is painfully long: harsh poverty for the bottom 20 percent of the population, miserable public health care, inadequate education, an ailing infrastructure, regressive taxation, and inevitable divisions in civil society. There is also a broader context to these difficulties. Since 1973, the Anglo-American countries (the U.S., Canada, the U.K.) have provided the dominant, but hopelessly mediocre, leadership of the world economy, encouraging the universal use of induced unemployment as the principal weapon against inflation. Consequently, many of the industrialized countries of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development group have very large numbers of chronically unemployed people, and the glitter of the 1980s actually constituted a recessionary boom within an overall pattern of long-term stagnation. Unemployment will be the main issue in the new interregnum which we now face, and this takes us back to the 1920s and 1930s, only on a much more complex and global scale.

After World War I, the principal problem which the world confronted was to find an appropriate role for the United States and Germany, commensurate with their economic influence. Today, the United States, the victor in the cold war, must make the same kind of adjustment with Japan and Europe. Moreover, finding a geopolitical balance with Asia and Europe becomes immensely more complicated with Soviet fragmentation. Trading-bloc rivalries, for example, may well become intensified through competition for the loyalties of new, unstable polities in the heart of Eurasia. In these circumstances, the pressing challenge for the U.S. is to move from the increasingly artificial assumptions of dominance to a real and workable multilateralism.

Domestically, the adjustment means a very great shift of resources into the civilian sector of the U.S. economy. If Washington keeps a big military club in its hands, it will continue to be weakened economically; so, the U.S. must take the very real risks of short-term geopolitical flux in order to reach greater long-term stability. What the Republic needs is a radical reversal of the Reagan-Bush agenda, a new New Deal. Since such an outcome would involve considerable hardship, and is extremely unlikely, domestic economic problems will undoubtedly persist.

Internationally, reorientation demands a profound change in attitude. The neoconservatives who have controlled the executive branch in the U.S. for the last decade have always been unremittingly hostile to such forums as the UN, until recent circumstances made internationalism more convenient. This fickle and opportunistic attitude to bodies like the World Court is a sure recipe for future problems.

Unfortunately, all signs now indicate that the present leadership of the U.S. is nowhere close to really and substantially redefining its role in the world. For that reason, the new interregnum promises to be long and difficult.

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THE ECUMENICAL TASK: 1992

TY MAM DUW COMMUNITY

THE BUCK STOPS HERE

Ty Mam Duw is the home of the Poor Clare Colettine Community in Hawarden, North Wales, Great Britain. Poor Clares are Franciscan women religious who lead an enclosed, contemplative life. "*Ty Mam Duw*" is Welsh for "House of the Mother of God." It has a shrine chapel of Our Lady of Schonstatt, Mother of Fair Love, and is also a center for pilgrimage and retreat.

Friends and mothers are people who are always there, who provide a loving, receptive continuity in the midst of turmoil. We are like that. We are always at home, we cannot go off for the weekend or the week.

When we arrived in Hawarden on the high tide of Pope John Paul II's visit to Britain in 1982, interchurch courtesy was the stuff of headlines. The house of our community had been in Hawarden for fifty years before we arrived from the London community to swell the ranks.

On the crest of this wave of goodwill, we sent a member of our community designated to the "external work" to call on our "separated brethren" whilst out shopping. She arrived first at the parish church (Church in Wales—the Welsh branch of the Anglican church). It was a Monday morning, and to the sister's surprise, the door of the Church of St. Deiniol was open. She wandered around till she heard voices; now all our sisters walk quietly, so naturally she made no racket as she approached. It was her first day serving the community in the external work, and as she silently glided down the vestry steps she really meant to say "Good morning," but from force of conventual habit she exclaimed "Praised be Jesus Christ." To this the three clergy, deep in discussion, ought to have answered "Now and forever. Amen." But they appeared more electrified than edified, and leaped in the air and fell back a pace or two. Nothing abashed, sister swept meekly down the stairs, assuring them lovingly that we prayed for them all, and were united with them in prayer. The three grinned rather sheepishly, and it was only when our acquaintance had advanced somewhat with Canon Davies, the rector of St. Deiniol's Church, that sister learned that they had

(Continued on page 16)

TY MAM DUW COMMUNITY *is a Poor Clare Colettine monastery in Hawarden, North Wales.*

THEODORE PULCINI

THE ALTERNATIVE IS WORSE

I have never been enthusiastic about ecumenism or interreligious dialogue. This I admit freely. So much talk, so many wooden gestures, so many staged encounters.... It all seemed so unproductive, even counterproductive. Why expend the time and the energy for such minimal results?

A satisfactory answer eluded me. As an Orthodox Christian priest, I became more convinced with each successive ecumenical experience that Orthodoxy simply does not speak the same "language" as other traditions, whether Christian or non-Christian. Without a common language, how could any genuine communication ever occur, all good intentions notwithstanding?

I therefore felt a sort of personal vindication when, in early June last year, just as I was leaving the country for a summer of research and language study in Jerusalem, I received word that the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of North and South America was suspending its participation in the National Council of Churches and terminating its dialogue with the Episcopal church—decisions officially communicated to the respective bodies in letters dated June 13, 1991. Finally, I thought, someone is facing reality. As it turned out, however, the next three months would prompt me to see reality a bit differently.

I had been in Jerusalem once before, for three months in 1977. When I arrived this past June, it was immediately apparent to me what a toll the last fourteen years had taken. I was struck by the omnipresent graffiti, slogans in Arabic or English, pro-Palestinian or anti-Arab, antagonistically arranged in a point-counterpoint war of spray-painted words. The labyrinth of the Old City's walls had become yet another battlefield where Arab clashed with Israeli, Zionist with Palestinian nationalist. Even when the slogans were painted over, the huge black blemishes on the white stone served as wordless testimonies to an ongoing conflict. As I walked down Greek Orthodox Patriarchate Road, one graffito in particular, over the doorway of the Patriarchate's museum, abruptly drew my attention: "Death to Christians," it said.

Who sprayed such a malediction on the ancient wall, I cannot

THEODORE PULCINI, *a priest of the Antiochian Orthodox Christian Archdiocese of North America, lives in Pittsburgh.*

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say. But its presence underscored the fact that beneath all of the political aspects of the tensions and violence racking that part of the world, there is an unmistakable religious substratum. This became clearer to me as the weeks went by.

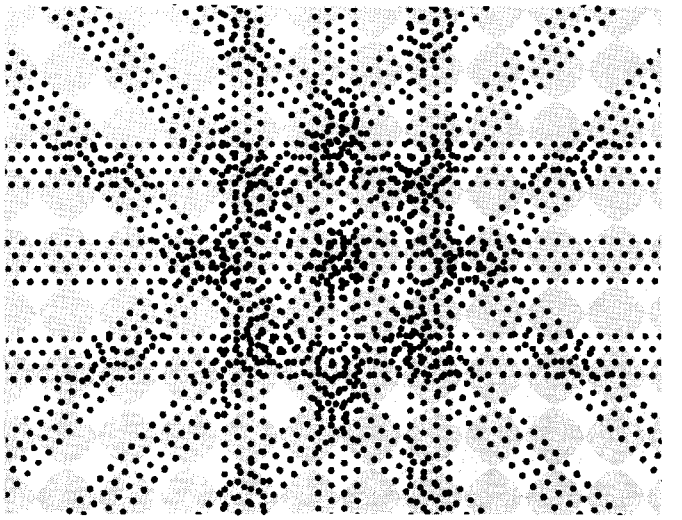
Fridays, in particular, made me edgy. As Jews streamed into the Old City to visit the Western Wall, especially at sunset to greet the Sabbath, they came face to face with Arab Muslims and Christians. I would sit near Jaffa Gate and watch the inter-religious mix. It suddenly struck me that Jews, Christians, and Muslims express their real attitude toward one another by eye contact, or lack of it. Now, you might assume that the avoidance of eye contact in Jerusalem is like that in any large American city—a studied avoidance of looking at the other. But it is somehow different in Jerusalem. There people *do* look at others, but in such a way as to look *through* them. It is a technique full of significance. To avoid eye contact completely would be simply to say, "Your presence here does not matter to me one way or the other. Just leave me alone, I'll leave you alone, and we'll go about our respective business." In Jerusalem, the "look-at, look-through" technique says, "Yes, I know you are there, but I will look right through you to show my distain for your presence. I don't care to know who you are or to let you know who I am. Our worlds, though juxtaposed, are separate and will remain that way—until, God willing, your presence can be eliminated."

Such is the tenor of interreligious encounter I found on the streets of the Old City. Certainly, Arab Christians and Muslims share a much greater affinity, united as they are by a common culture and against a common adversary, than either group does with the Jews in their midst. But even between Christians and Muslims a certain distance is enforced and a mutual suspicion nurtured. People who deal with each other cordially, even affectionately, while in each other's presence will later take you aside to reveal their doubts about how trustworthy "the other" really is.

The triangle of interreligious tension produces a pervasive, even if low-grade, tension which threatens to spark open conflict. Living in it even for only three months disturbed me profoundly. As is traditional for Orthodox clergy in that part of the world, I wore my cassock on the street, so I was easily identifiable as a Christian priest. At times I felt the need to break the tension by establishing eye contact and offering a "Shalom" or a "Marhaba" to "the other" I passed on the street. The effects were chilling and amusing at the same time. Usually, the ultrareligious Jews studiously avoided the eye contact and ignored the greeting, as if silently chiding me for violating a protective taboo. The Muslims, calling up their sense of solidarity with their Christian fellow-Arabs, usually returned the eye contact and greeting, even if clearly taken aback. Attempting to punch holes through carefully constructed and maintained walls of separation is not a popular thing to do.

My stay in Jerusalem gave rise to several important insights regarding interreligious encounter. The first was that proximity does not, in itself, entail constructive interaction; in fact, it can discourage it. Just because people are in the same locale, standing beside one another or haggling with each other in a business setting does not mean that they know one another, or even care to know one another. Pluralistic settings, like the Old City of Jerusalem or most of the larger cities in the United States, are deceptive. Because people mix and are physically close to one another on any number of occasions, these can they give the illusion that, despite significantly different worldviews and belief systems, they are bound together by mutual acceptance or respect. Often people convince themselves that the illusion is true. But with the eyes of an objective outsider in Jerusalem, I was able to see that this is not usually the case. True encounter is more the product of receptivity than proximity, and such receptivity is hard to come by. It is not a natural disposition. It must be cultivated.

That led me to a second insight. Jews, Christians, or Muslims with even a modicum of historical perspective would admit that their traditions have been linked by history, that a part of their respective stories forms a common story of monotheism in the human religious saga. At certain points in the landscape of each tradition, there are less-than-distinct borders separating it from the other traditions, certain points at which one must recognize an affinity with, even a certain indebtedness to, the others. But recognition of the fact can be extremely threatening. Human beings have a need to be *distinct*, to stand apart from others, to separate out from the throng in order to have an identity. Because it is so difficult to form an identity positively, i.e., to articulate and internalize what it *is* that makes them or their collectivity unique, many opt for the "apophatic" path to identity-formation, i.e., for developing a sense of who and what they are by making explicit who and what they *are not*. In such a case, the bolder and sharper the lines of demarcation, the better. Those whose identity is so bound up with religious "differentness" would suffer grave personal and communal assault if they were to recognize links with those against whom they have defined them-



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selves. Their comforting view of uniqueness would be undermined, their smug particularity compromised. I saw plenty of such thinking in Jerusalem: Jews who, with a judgmental wave of the hand, dismissed Christianity as a scandalous aberration of the *goyim*, a less noble, even ignoble, religious phenomenon from which they could learn nothing; Christians who refused to admit their Jewish patrimony (like the man who railed at me for daring to claim that the Virgin Mary was a Jew); Muslims who, rather than recognizing how both Judaism and Christianity fed into the wealth of their own tradition, choose to view these traditions as nothing more than corrupted degenerations of a pristine Islamic *ur*-religion. Weak identity, personal or communal, formed apophatically rather than positively, resists the discovery of common ground because such common ground exists only at the expense of one's own turf.

Abraham's progeny find in Jerusalem a microcosm of the domain of faith engendered by their forefather, a microcosm where estranged siblings are forced to recognize one another's existence in uneasy encounter, an encounter of proximity but not of mutual receptivity. To be able to be receptive to another faith, one must have a firm appreciation of one's own, an appreciation inspired by the resources of one's own tradition and not fueled by deprecation of another's. Such are the preconditions of authentic and constructive interreligious encounter. Such encounter is rare indeed in the streets of Jerusalem.

And elsewhere. The streets of Jerusalem, so to speak, wend their way to Western Europe and to America...to wherever Abraham's offspring are brought together. The receptivity I found lacking in Jerusalem needs to be cultivated here as well. The tensions and violence there stand as a somber reminder of what can happen elswhere. How long before we too start to look through one another?

I must admit that the interreligious lessons of this past summer, though unsettling, were considerably less painful than the ecumenical, intra-Christian lessons I was forced to learn. The latter, after all, affected my own household and had direct bearing on my own identity as an Orthodox priest.

Students of Christian ecumenism are doubtless aware of the Jerusalem Patriarchate's recent moves to curtail formal dialogue with other Christian groups. In 1989 Patriarch Diodoros I notified the heads of other Orthodox churces, as well as leaders of other Christian traditions, that he had decided to withdraw his church from all ecumenical dialogues. The reasons he gave were twofold: First, "heterodox" denominations, he asserted, were using ecumenical relations as a ploy for enticing members of his flock into their respective folds. Second, Orthodoxy really had no need to engage in ecumenical discussion since it already possessed the fullness of Christian truth.

He explained his motives further in an address he gave in Fili, Greece, at the Greek Old Calendarist Monastery of Saint Cyprian and Justina.

> The ecumenical movement, with its dialogues—the only aim of which is to eat away at our church—today seeks to subjugate Orthodoxy to the commands of papism and ecumenism. It has for many years been working to destroy Orthodoxy in the Holy Land....
>
> It is regrettable that, for decades now, nominally in order not to disturb the unity of the Orthodox church, Jerusalem has followed the other churches by participating in ecumenical dialogues....What we have observed with sadness is the fearful exploitation of these dialogues by heretics. They exploit our faithful, trying by every means to convert them. They produce photographs showing the pope with our patriarchs and bishops, claiming that union has already been achieved. "Do not listen to your bishops. The union has already been accomplished and the Orthodox church has joined the Roman Catholic church"....
>
> We have thus pondered our responsibilities...and with enlightenment from God, we have decided to cease every dialogue between the Patriarchate and the heterodox churches, since no positive result has emerged from so many years of contact....
>
> [*Orthodox Tradition*, v. 7, no. 1 (1990), p.1]

It is obvious that the patriarch's suspicion is directed, above all, toward the Roman church, and it is undeniable that many individuals from formerly Orthodox families now fill the ranks of the Latin and Greek Catholic (Melkite) communities in the patriarchal territory. (Indeed, one Orthodox priest in Jerusalem told me that he could not think of one family in his parish that was not religiously divided.) But the partriarch did not elaborate on why or how this situation developed. One would be led to think that unbridled, blatant proselytism currently takes place in the patriarchate and the patriarch is reacting specifically to it. But such is not the case. Ecumenical observers were startled by Diodoros's decision. While in Jerusalem I began to suspect that the patriarch was using ecumenism as a scapegoat for the many internal problems of his jurisdiction, and my suspicions remain to this day.

Diodoros is quite right to point to the often unethical proselytism that various groups, especially the Latins and Greek Catholics, have used to entice Orthodox away from their ancestral church. But he must also admit to the other side of the story: if these other groups were "pulling" Orthodox from their church, the Orthodox hierarchy was, by its intransigence and high-handedness, "pushing" them from it. The laity of the Jerusalem Patriarchate, virtually all Arabs, have for centuries been subjected to a completely Greek hierarchy, which they feel has been less than responsive to their needs and aspirations. Through the years, Orthodox have become Latins or Greek Catholics or Protestants because those churches responded to their needs—spiritual, material, national—in a way their ancestral church would not. In

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short, many Arab Orthodox were so frustrated with and alienated from a church dominated by foreigners who had clearly relegated them to second-class status that they simply found it easier to go elsewhere. It is interesting to note that at present the Latin Patriarch of Jerusalem (Michael Sabbah), the Greek Catholic Patriarchal Vicar (Archbishop Lutfi Laham), and the Anglican Archbishop (Samir Kafity) are all Arabs. The only major ecclesiastical leader in the Holy Land who is not an Arab is the Orthodox Patriarch of Jerusalem. This has precipitated long-standing, pernicious agitation within the Patriarchate.

I got a personal glimpse of what the Arab Orthodox of Jerusalem must endure. After receiving permission from the appropriate officials to liturgize while in the Patriarchate, I was hospitably received and given the privilege of serving at the altar of the Arab Orthodox church of St. James in the Holy Sepulchre. One Sunday, as the pastor of the community was preaching at the conclusion of the liturgy, I was standing in the sanctuary. There was to be a memorial service after the liturgy. The family who requested it had invited one of the Patriarchate's bishops to officiate. While the sermon was still being delivered, this bishop entered the sanctuary and, catching sight of me, gruffly demanded to know who I was and whether I had permission to serve while in Jerusalem. I responded to his satisfaction. A few moments later he accosted me again and demanded to know why I was there, at the Arab Orthodox church, rather than having gone to concelebrate at the Greek Liturgy held earlier in the Catholicon of the Holy Sepulchre. His baldly ethnocentric message was quite clear: the real Orthodoxy of Jerusalem was Greek, and Orthodoxy in its indigenous Arabic expression was somehow of lesser quality.

For whatever reason, the Patriarch chose to blame others—and ecumenism—for his problems. Ecumenical relations entail a certain mutual accountability, which apparently he wanted to avoid. After accusing other groups of undermining his church, Diodoros did not wait for them to respond; he leveled the charge and left. It would have been better to stay in the ring and fight, to deliver the blows when necessary and take them when deserved. Cutting off communication only encourages unchallenged implementation of often opposed, sometimes duplicitous, and usually self-serving agendas by the various Christian groups, which have already been sapped of much of their influence because of the continuous decline in Christian population. Today in Jerusalem nothing less than the survival of the native Christian witness is at stake. It is a time to pull together, not pull apart. When ties are severed, the tempering element in intergroup relations—mutuality—fades. In such a situation extremes flourish, positions become petrified, self-evaluation diminishes, and complacency reigns supreme. The results are never salutary.

I am still not wildly enthusiatic about interreligious and ecumenical dialogue. As an Orthodox, I remain suspicious of the enterprise. But after this past summer, I feel compelled to re-invest myself in it. Jerusalem taught me what demons come to fill the vacuum caused by the absence of interchange with "the others."

The juxtaposition of major world religions, typical of Jerusalem, is growing ever more typical of the rest of the world. Increasingly cultural and religious interpenetration characterizes our rapidly shrinking planet. If mutual receptivity is not forthcoming, such proximity will only breed suspicion and, in time, hostility. Remember Jerusalem's graffiti. Our own walls already bear comparable slogans.

If it is true that weak identity fuels interreligious animosity and undermines honest encounter, then it is time for all of us to devote attention to internal revitalization. Straw men abound where poor self-understanding prevails. Unless each of our traditions dares to move beyond the superficial in articulating what it is about, unless we risk perceiving ourselves more objectively through historical-critical study, we will be more likely to define ourselves in contradistinction to others (or what we perceive others to be) and to define ourselves in reaction to every new social or political issue thrust upon us. The dangers in such tendencies are obvious.

Strong identity reduces our need to distance ourselves from "the others." They become less of a threat, less of an adversary. We can talk and listen to one another and call one another to critical self-examination. The situation in the Orthodox Patriarchate of Jerusalem gave me a glimpse of what happens when such accountability is evaded.

I understand why Orthodox have felt ambivalent toward ecumenism. Many Protestants, even if they refrain from saying so, see us as quaint and colorful obscurantists, adherents to some folk ethno-religion. Many Roman Catholics view us as rough-edged relics of their own past who are to be drawn into the "maturity" of the Roman church. Little wonder that Orthodox feel marginalized and manipulated in ecumenical encounters. After a while, the condescension chafes and the shallow understanding irritates; it becomes easier just to absent oneself. It seems that one positive effect of the Greek Archdiocese's threat to withdraw from the NCC is Protestant recognition of the need to come to a greater appreciation of Orthodox sensibilities. NCC General Secretary Joan Campbell recently observed, "What may come out of this is a better understanding of the Orthodox churches by the Protestant churches." One can only hope.

What I saw and heard in Jerusalem last summer led me to a conversion, even if only a qualified one. An anti-ecumenist recognized the need to re-invest himself in the interreligious and ecumenical undertaking and to insist that it be candid and substantial, not politically motivated or given to bland niceties. As messy and aggravating as interreligious and ecumenical encounters can be for us Orthodox, they are necessary. The perils of nonencounter are simply too great.

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THE BUCK STOPS HERE

(Continued from page 12)

momentarily mistaken her for a pre-Reformation ghost.

St. Deiniol's Church is adjacent to St. Deiniol's Library, the creation of W.E. Gladstone. This is a research center and also a seminary for mature students for the Church in Wales. In addition it gives courses and summer schools which attract visitors from different parts of the world. On this occasion, the Reverend Jagger, the warden of the library, welcomed sister, gave her coffee, and a guided tour of the precincts; and Canon Davies showed her round the church and introduced her to a generous member of his flock who showed her round the village.

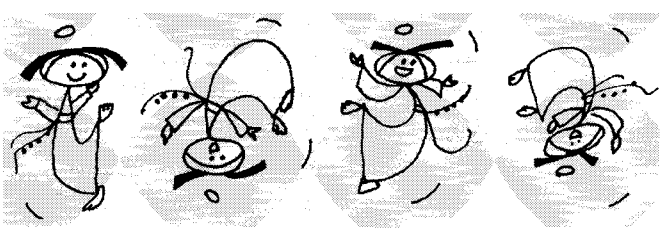
On the way home sister dropped in at the Manse. There the Methodist minister, a lady, administered five chapels under many difficulties on her own.

We heard with amazement that they had not got round to a joint ecumenical service in Hawarden, and we decided when Christmas came to hold a carol service. We had more courage than facilities, and the enclosure wall with its two small gratings which at that time divided the public chapel from the sisters' choir did not deter us. It did, however, impede us, since our singing was virtually inaudible. We had an area about twenty feet by nine feet in which we offered about a hundred people tea, not without difficulty. This carol service on the Saturday before the first Sunday of Advent has become a permanent feature in our life.

In 1986 we rebuilt the church and choir area so that we now have an L-shaped chapel with an open wrought iron grille, and use the old chapel, now completely separate, as a dining room for the increasing number of groups, Catholic and otherwise, who wished to come for a day of prayer.

One visiting group was an ecumenical pilgrimage from Albi in France—as they said, they were Albigensians. Most of them did not speak English, so instead of Vespers or a shared service we performed mime, the "Call of St. Clare" (our foundress), on the origins of our way of life, and danced the "Canticle of the Creatures" that our holy father St. Francis composed. We have used dance and drama in our liturgy and at the annual carol service as a noncontroversial form of sharing.

Alongside the new dining hall we lodged the craft room where the community's handiwork is on sale: including cards, jams, icons, knitwear, woodwork, toys, and "nearly new" jumble. We put a small poster advertising this in the entrance hall of St Deiniol's Library. There is not a lot to see in Hawarden beyond the castle, the library, and the statue of Mr. Gladstone which was cast for O'Connell Street but never arrived, so many visitors to St. Deiniol's do read the "Visitors Welcome" notice and walk over to see us.



We also came to a friendly, mutual arrangement about visitors—we would put up studying nuns for them, and they would look after exalted ecclesiastical gentlemen for us. Bringing groups for Vespers has also been a way of sharing, along with welcoming people who wish to pray in the great simplicity and beauty of our chapel.

But all this only scratched the surface. We came into our own with old and used Christmas cards. Like all Franciscans, we have no financial basis. We survive on the little we can earn by the work of our hands and on the alms people generously give us. Most of the food that we eat, that is not home-grown, is begged. We send out an annual Christmas newsletter to all our benefactors, sharing our news and asking for their continued support. We mentioned our need for old Christmas cards and kind friends notified the *Liverpool Post* and some other papers. Many people came and brought their cards (and jam jars). Often these were people who had not been inside a church of any denomination since childhood—if at all—and some were fellow Christians of other denominations. We welcomed them, gave them a newsletter, thanked them for their kindness, and showed them the shop—where they generally bought a pot of marmalade. Even more wrote and continue to write. They were by no means all Catholics, but their unity is often that of desperate need:

Dear Mother,

My wife left me on Thursday, we have three children under seven, one with advanced Down's syndrome. I am desperate....

Dear Mother,

John shot himself up on the moors. I am desperate—where did I fail him?

Dear Friends,

I am fifteen and pregnant, I am still at school. My parents demand that I have an abortion. I am desperate....

Dear Friends of Ty Mam Duw,

I heard about you. I haven't included my name and address. I borrowed a lot of money from my father and my sister to start the business, and it failed completely. We are all desperate....

Desperation is completely ecumenical, we can all understand it. The consecrated woman is a state of neutrality, a most literal no-man's-land where the contending forces can meet in safety. She is a part of the truce of God. The scrubbed face, the rope cord, and the patched habit behind the wrought iron grilles which separate the parlors and the choir are a safe place to leave your burden. The buck stops here.

With actively committed Christians of any denomination it

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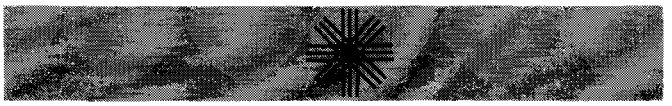

will not be difficult to reach unity. What holds back the reunion of the Christian churches is the great majority of their people who combine apathy with fear. That is our gift: complete love casts out fear. A lot of love can be shared by needing Christmas cards and selling jam. St. Clare called charity "the bond of perfection, it is the thing that ties us together."

We are in the Decade of Evangelization, preparing for the second millennium. It is the assured wisdom that the scandal of our division keeps many would-be Christians from our ranks. This, if put to the test, will be found untrue. What keeps many from our ranks is genuine ignorance of what we are, and fear; fear of the high price that one must now pay in our Western society to be a Christian; fear that the sacrifices that must be made to cross the bridge are not worth it. We are here to show by our love and acceptance, and above all by our joy, that it is supremely worth it. But all this is, as it were, the foothills of our objective. The mountain beyond is a life of love lived in community together, in adoration of the Trinity, and intercession for the needs of all the people of God—Gentile and Jew, slave and free, men and women....Charity is the fruit of prayer, prayer is one of the greatest means by which we may obtain the grace to fulfill Christ's command to love one another.

SCREEN

INTO THE WILDERNESS

BERESFORD'S 'BLACK ROBE'

Black Robe, Brian Moore's brief but complicated novel about a would-be martyr who learns that his real martyrdom is to stay alive in the service of a people whom he can't understand and who can't understand him, has been translated into film by the amazing, infuriating Bruce Beresford. Beresford amazes because he is a modest virtuoso, a deft technician who can do anything he wants with a camera but who always trims his skills to the precise needs of his material. And Beresford infuriates because he is a master of spectacle who is also an ascetic. His movies are packed with gorgeous imagery but Beresford refuses to let you gorge. He always cuts away from a breathtaking shot a couple of seconds before any other director would. *Black Robe* is a piece of beautiful, stern, fiercely economical filmmaking. Take your eyes off the screen for ten seconds and you will be confused when you look back. Take your eyes off the screen for five crucial seconds towards the end and you will not only misunderstand the appointment the hero is keeping with destiny but you will cheat yourself of one of the most astonishing cinematic coups I've ever seen.

In literary form, Moore's story was trim enough. Reduced to one hundred minutes of celluloid, it positively sprints, yet Beresford manages to retain many of the novel's nuances and contradictions. In the Quebec of 1634, Father Laforgue, a grimly evangelical Jesuit bracing himself for a glorious death at the hands of savages, is sent by his superior to find out if a Huron mission farther north is still in existence or has been destroyed by the fiercely expansionist Iroquois. Serving as Laforgue's bodyguards and guides are some Algonquins headed by one Chomina who has taken this commission not out of any love of the French but for the sake of keeping them as allies against the Iroquois. Because of these Algonquins, and especially because of Chomina's decisions and behavior, Laforgue's undertaking becomes a voyage into painful self-knowledge, which includes a realization of what his real fate is to be. The priest's disillusionment is twofold, and accomplished, like his physical journey, in two stages.

First, there is Laforgue's growing realization that he simply cannot change the way Native Americans view the world and, without such a shift in consciousness, no religious conversion can take place. The Algonquins live in a universe where forests speak and ghosts walk at night, where sadism toward enemies is always commendable and pity must always be taken as weakness, where a man should have many wives and copulation may be carried out in public. Dizzied by the gulf between him and his designated spiritual wards, Laforgue feels spiritually undermined and is even unable to keep his assistant Daniel, in love with Chomina's daughter, from going native. When Chomina, wanting to fulfill his duty to Laforgue but overruled by his fellow braves and swayed by a malicious Indian magician, leaves the Jesuit in the wilderness, this abandonment seems like an inevitable fulfillment of the psychological defeat that Laforgue has already suffered.

But now comes the second stage of Laforgue's physical and spiritual ordeal. Chomina repents the abandonment and returns with only his family and a few followers (now including Daniel) to retrieve the priest. But missionary and Algonquins are all taken prisoner by Iroquois who murder Chomina's family (excepting the daughter) before the chief's eyes. An escape is effected but Chomina later dies of his wounds. Daniel and his Algonquin love see Laforgue safely to the Huron mission (which still stands, though in ruin, and with its converts ravaged by a plague), then leave him at the priest's own request. Reflecting on the nobility and intrepidness of Chomina throughout the ordeal, and disturbed by the Christian insistence that, without baptism, there is no admission into the presence of God after death, Laforgue now begins to doubt not just the possibility of converting the Indians but the very purpose of the task. How can he urge upon any people a religion that, for want of a few drops of water, denies heaven to a man as noble as Chomina while opening the gates for many baptized mediocrities? How Laforgue breaks out of his immobilizing puzzlement and into action, and how Bruce Beresford shows this recovery, constitute a thrilling, and thrillingly cinematic climax.

There are some fumbles in the presentation of the first half of the odyssey. Most of Moore's alterations of his novel are excellent (especially his reduction of the young chief Neehatin in order to give more scope to Chomina), but he has jettisoned the joshing, semi-obscene English he invented as an equivalent

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of Algonquin speech. The screen natives simply speak Algonquin among themselves, which is fine, but the English subtitles sometimes make the Indians sound quaint, even cute. (But for those passages in which natives speak English to the white, the dialogue is excellent.) Some of Beresford's visual tropes are off kilter. The flashbacks to Laforgue's early priesthood in France, though they work in the book, don't do much for the movie because they seem stuck in arbitrarily rather than being detours taken by Laforgue's train of thought. And Lothaire Bluteau's performance as the priest, though not bad, is problematic.

But these flaws are more than offset by Beresford's strengths: his use of spectacle as psychology; his ability to make secondary characters register vividly in a matter of seconds (note the implacable smile of the Iroquois chief and the dotted pattern his war paint makes on his cheeks); his swift, peremptory cutting; and his ability to make a wintry landscape simultaneously suggest lofty beauty and the absolute rejection of anything human. All these combine to make the first half of *Black Robe* absorbing despite its faults.

And the second half is flawless. Beresford's economy and swiftness make the sequences of combat, capture, escape, and suffering breathtaking. It is precisely through his confrontation of Iroquois cruelty and his perception of Algonquin stoicism in the face of that cruelty that make Laforgue aware of the sheer otherness of these people he is trying to convert, an otherness that makes his religious mission seemingly impossible.

This otherness is epitomized by Chomina and beautifully embodied by August Schellenberg. Chomina expresses no outrage when he faces his torturers and almost no dismay. Laforgue shows comparable fortitude but his is a display of courage reinforced by Christian faith. With Chomina, it's not so much a matter of courage...there's not really an English term for it, the nearest equivalent, I think, is *good form*. Chomina sings in ritual defiance of his tormentors and if that singing seems to rise to a pitch of anguish when his son's throat is cut, that is probably what we make ourselves hear, not what the Algonquin puts into his song. He will not surrender to his enemies an atom of his inner self.

And, lest we be tempted to think of the Algonquins as "good Indians" and the Iroquois as "bad Indians" (as Kevin Costner in *Dances With Wolves* divides the Plains Indians into good and bad according to which tribe is fighting on the movie star's side), Moore has written an exchange between Daniel and Chomina after the torture that gives a contemptuous backhander to any glib judgment on these strangers to our morality.

CHOMINA

You wanted to join us. What do you think now?

DANIEL

I think the Iroquois are animals.

CHOMINA

No. We are the same. If they showed pity, others would call them weak.

It is this otherness that Laforgue must struggle with at the ruined Huron mission at the end of the movie. The few Huron survivors of the epidemic confront the missionary. They have toyed with the idea of killing him. They have also considered taking baptism as a magic cure for the epidemic. Didn't the previous missionary tell them it would work? But even if the "magic water" can cure, does this strange new priest really love them enough to work the miracle? "Do you love us, Black Robe?"

And Laforgue replies...well, see the movie.

RICHARD ALLEVA

STAGE

VOICE & MOUTH & FACE

CHAIKIN'S 'STRUCK DUMB'

Joseph Chaikin visited Swarthmore College this fall to conduct a two-week workshop in acting and directing. At the end of his stay he gave a public performance of *Struck Dumb* and the Angel's monologue from *The War in Heaven* (works he co-created with respectively Jean-Claude van Itallie and Sam Shepard), and Samuel Beckett's *What Is the Word*, the English translation of which Beckett dedicated to Chaikin. It was the first time I had seen Chaikin perform since his earlier collaboration with Shepard, *Tongues*, was presented at the Public Theater in 1979. On May 7, 1984, he suffered a stroke while undergoing open-heart surgery, but by January of the next year, partly through his work with Shepard, he was performing again—a radio production of *The War in Heaven*. His aphasia makes it impossible for him to remember lines, but with the script in front of him, he is still a formidable presence on stage. This program was one of the most impressive things I have seen in a long time. Sadly, it was billed as "his farewell performance"; anyone who has not seen it should hope that, like Sarah Bernhardt, he makes a practice of farewell performances.

Chaikin has been a force in American theater since he founded The Open Theater in 1964 to explore with a group of performers and playwrights the interplay of words and movement, the way in which sharply realized images can melt into others, to produce, after extended periods of experiment and rehearsal, collective works in which the author of the text is simply one of a group of collaborators. Two of the most celebrated works to come out of this creative context were *The Serpent: A Ceremony*, for which van Itallie provided the words and the structure, and *Terminal*, with a text by Susan Yankowitz, which was identified as a work in progress when I saw it in Philadelphia in 1970. I had some trouble with *Terminal*, a consideration of death and dying, partly because the rhythmic pounding of sticks too often got between me and the shifting images, the dissolving words of the work. But *The Serpent*, based largely on Genesis, was completely absorbing even when juxtapositions were not immediately clear. After the disbanding of The Open Theater in 1973, Chaikin became increasingly interested in investigating himself as instrument. The result was the double bill, *Tongues* and *Savage/Love*, which he and Shepard devised and which he performed as solo pieces with music.

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The exchange of letters between the collaborators, printed in *Joseph Chaikin & Sam Shepard, Letters and Texts, 1972-1984* (New American Library), show Chaikin wanting "to try voices from different sources" and to perform "words of yours with my voice and mouth and face," which he certainly did in the impressive Public Theater production. This preoccupation of Chaikin's from the late 1970s is a forerunner of what was to come, the intellectual/vocal investigations of *Tongues* becoming a necessity for the performer trying to find his way back to words after his stroke. Work on *The War in Heaven* predates Chaikin's stroke, but the Angel's monologue, as we now have it, is a transformation of the earlier material through Chaikin's struggles, with Shepard's help, to regain his speech. There are two lines of speech and thought running through the monologue, printed in separate columns in the text in *Letters and Texts*. The one belongs to the angel, who, for some unknown reason, has crashed to earth, been made prisoner, and seeks release; the other is presumably Chaikin's, an associational meditation that moves in and out of the angel's words. Both are Chaikin, of course, and the angel's reiterated cry ("Take me back"; "Turn me loose") and his final forlorn statement ("I am here/by mistake") are powerful evocations of the trap of aphasia.

By contrast to the Shepard piece, *Struck Dumb* is more personal, more domestic. Set in Venice, California, where Chaikin lives, it shows the speaker moving out of his house, walking to the beach. On the way he discovers flowers and the sun and the artifacts of everyday existence; he greets a dog, he finds a shell on the beach, and declares it a miracle. "Miracle" is a word that does not come easily to Chaikin, but the compression on "acle" makes a caress of the word, as though he were using his disability as a tool. The process of discovery in the piece is not simply what he sees and feels but the finding of the word that identifies the object and the response to it. The name of the piece is itself an example of finding the accurate words. Not only does *Struck Dumb* identify Chaikin's condition before his slow return to words, but it describes his state in the piece itself, for as he walks from door to beach he is struck dumb in the popular sense of the phrase, is in constant wonder at the miracles he meets and names.

The danger in this kind of review is that one may slip into the sympathetic condescension which too often plagues the disabled. It is unattractive at any time, but it is particularly inappropriate here. The range of Chaikin's expressions, the modulations of his voice are as remarkable as they were in *Tongues*; "voice and mouth and face" still give substance and resonance to the words. Of course, his aphasia marks the performance because it is the subject and the theme of all three pieces. My first reaction was to think that *Struck Dumb* should have ended rather than opened the performance, that the audience would then have wrapped itself in the remarkably moving piece. It was a sentimental reaction. On second thought, it seems just right that, after sitting to perform the longer works, Chaikin ended by standing up to read the very brief Beckett piece. That allowed the program to end on the question that ran through the other works and that defines his own continuing struggle, "What is the word?"

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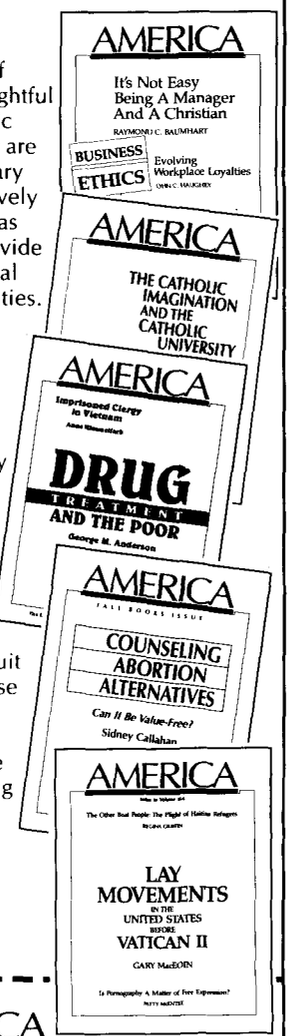

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When hell shifted, so did hope

DEATH AND THE FUTURE LIFE IN VICTORIAN LITERATURE AND THEOLOGY
Michael Wheeler
Cambridge University Press, $54.50, 456 pp.

Elizabeth Beverly

Between March 6 and April 10, 1856, in Carlisle, England, five little girls from one to ten years old, all daughters of Catherine and Archibald Tait, died of scarlet fever. No amount of imagination, no amount of empathy can allow me, 145 years later, to feel the full weight of those words. Five daughters. Five deaths. Five weeks. It is not only the by-now senseless cruelty of too-much dying that makes the experience of the Tait family lie beyond me. It is, as well, the cultural conviction shared by these fine Anglicans that death alone could provide the solace of reunion, or, as Tait wrote later about his eight-year-old Mary, for her death seemed "a great and blessed reality, the way by which she was to attain her real life."

In his crowded, quirky, brilliant study of Victorian eschatology, Michael Wheeler, professor of English at Lancaster University, points to the Taits as he races past them. Sadly, for readers like me, he does not linger, because what he is truly documenting is not the predicament of the individual believer, nor even the nature of belief reflected in Victorian writing, although each of these issues is addressed and at times amplified. What Wheeler seeks to discuss is nothing less than hope itself. Hope on the move. Hope lurching into new realms. For during the Victorian period in England, the meaning of hope shifted significantly as the old Christian certainties—death, judgment, heaven, and hell—became secularized, socialized, in some cases privatized. By the early twentieth century, a new world of belief had emerged, one that looks similar to the diverse, relativized religious landscape that we see stretching around us today.

Wheeler's book is not without its faults. The first section, consisting of chapters on death, judgment, heaven, and hell abounds in paragraphs crammed with references and quotations. If the desired effect is polyphony, Wheeler fails to attain it. The univocality of the pedant-scholar blurs distinctions in the attempt to set individual ideas apart. Length is a problem, too. There are simply not enough sentences to bear the burden of Wheeler's mighty learning. Presumably, the professor's intended audience resides within the academy. But reading such a book should not have to be a task, requiring great funds of knowledge and an excellent memory. I suspect that the faults revealed by Professor Wheeler are common to many scholars who are simply good writers, not exceptionally fine ones.

My criticisms are not quibbles; the book would have benefitted greatly from some rigorous editing. But my criticisms are not nearly so important as Wheeler's achievements. These are several and remarkable. First, Wheeler is a marvelous close-reader. Adept and intuitive, widely read and scrupulous, when he finally allows himself to spend time with Victorian writers, as he does with Tennyson, Dickens, Newman, and Hopkins in the second section, Wheeler moves with delight, ease, and a type of whizzing accuracy through the meanings lurking in four well-wrought texts: *In Memoriam*, *Our Mutual Friend*, *The Dream of Gerontius*, and "The Wreck of the Deutschland." For those of us who admire this ability, Wheeler's performance is at once instructive and thrilling to watch. This would provide me with sufficient reason to read the book, but why should I recommend it to anyone else?

The answer lies in his second striking achievement: Wheeler resists the impulse to allow his deft reading to yield readily to glib interpretation. The book really is about Death and the Future Life; it really is about Victorian Literature and Theology. And there is nothing neat about either of these vast subjects. There is no single-minded or -willed Christian Victorian culture, and the people who lived all those years ago in England knew every bit as much and as little about death and the beyond as we do.

Wheeler does not try to neaten up the religious landscape so that we can pick our way more easily across it, but, at the same time, he does conscientiously point out striking and changing landmarks as they emerge. For instance, we can easily see that the industrial revolution made it possible for increasing numbers of Christians to suspect that hell was moving to earth, that perhaps one did not need to experience the loss of God's mercy in the afterlife if such loss could be so apparent and absolute in the present one. The gradual evacuation of hell was accompanied by a revamping of heaven as a place in which reunion with loved ones could be the reward and the ongoing improvement of the individual could be the promise.

When hell shifted, so did hope, and it is Wheeler's third significant achievement to allow us to hear in depth the voices of four great Victorian writers as they struggle with the meaning and promise of hope. Tennyson's long poem *In Memoriam*, in which the Anglican poet struggles with the untimely death of young Arthur Hallam, deals in part with the meaning of individual, not "typical" death. The poem also asks how the survivor can transform the ritual of grieving even as the meaning of the final judgment changes. Tennyson's answer, in part dictated by his heart, resides in the act of writing the poem itself. In *Our*

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Mutual Friend, Dickens, also a Protestant, paints a hellish social landscape, but relies on the integrity of the individual to transcend circumstance and attain the promise of heaven. Hell may be many things to Dickens, often the affliction of lust without love, but one can choose heaven. Behavior provides salvation, even here, even now. As Wheeler demonstrates, for these two Protestant writers, hope came to depend upon individual intention and good-will and action in an unfair and, at times, stifling world, set in chronological time.

The two Victorian Catholics of Wheeler's choosing are different, they know they are, and Wheeler's extraordinary sensitivity to the numinous quality of language permits his chapters on Newman's *The Dream of Gerontius* and Hopkins's "The Wreck of the Deutschland" to accomplish a nearly impossible task: to record a moment when the social, the literary, and the liturgical or theological merge to create a work of art that may lie beyond the full comprehension of those who do not share an intuitive sense of its liturgical roots. Such a work is bound to be misunderstood over time, to appear odd or minor, to recede from literary prominence, as both of these poems have done. Newman understood that for him the greatest hope lay not in the ascendant power of the individual to overcome hardship, but in an ancient and simple premise of Catholic ritual: one never need be alone, not even at the moment of death. Why are the words of the Mass so empowering? Simply collapse time, and all believers everywhere are saying the same words together. In this way, death opens to an eternal present. Wheeler extends his reading of Newman into an impressive analysis of Elgar's adaptation of the poem as an oratorio. As voices blend and merge at the moment of Gerontius's death, we understand that he has not been abandoned.

Wheeler's presentation of Hopkins's long poem radically opens the work wider than literary convention has yet allowed. As Wheeler reminds us, even now we are encouraged to marvel at Hopkins's technical ingenuity, but there is a haunting silence about the matter of deep meaning. Freud has had his way and any celibate priest who chooses to write about roiling seas and tall nuns and tempestuous foam must be up to something repressed and phallic. What Wheeler restores is the knowledge that, as he states it, the poem "articulates most fully a theology of death...rooted in Christ's own passion and death." Wheeler then proceeds to acquaint us with that theology as well as with the literary precedents that inspired Hopkins. That a Roman Catholic priest who believed in the Immaculate Conception could see within the figure and form of a drowning nun the type of all martyrs who, at the moment of death, are born into Christ as Christ was born into the world, attests to a vivid awareness of theological possibilities. That such a man could understand the wild and mysterious physical power of birthing and dying is a gift of empathy we expect of great poets. In this chapter of stunning scholarship, Wheeler insists, simply and fully, that we, as educated readers, not lose our ability to understand this poem, that we not let it die.

By placing these four voices side by side, Wheeler allows *us* to experience shifts in

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cultural meaning, to sense the moment when the theology of the future life was eclipsed by the secular rhetoric of personal intention and will, as well as that of social responsibility. Fittingly but awkwardly, the book has no conclusion. Oddly, that leaves the matter of closure up to the reader. For me, there is no closure, only a wonderful disturbance. Wheeler's final achievement is simple; he brings to life the thoughts and worlds of many, many people who otherwise might remain behind us in chronological time but beyond our present comprehension. In this way, the simple hope of Mary Tait does live on; her words still matter.

FAIR JUDGMENTS, FINE DISTINCTIONS

OUR AGE
English Intellectuals Between the World Wars—A Group Portrait
Noel Annan
Random House, $30, 479 pp.

David Castronovo

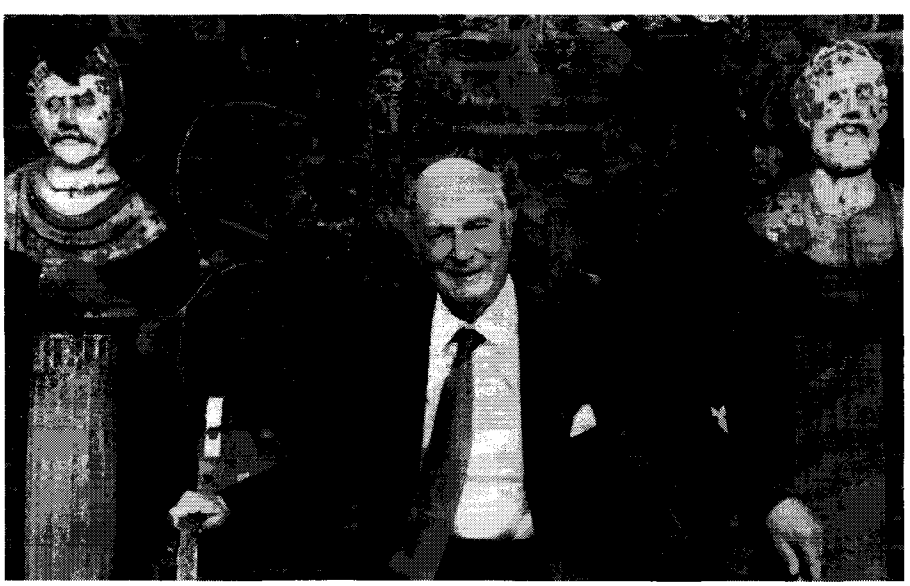
This magisterial account of British intellectual life in the central part of the twentieth century is a stunning achievement. The book—filled with the ideas, styles, and decisions of thinkers, artists, and people of action—is a work of civic virtue: Lord Annan is writing with the public purpose of examining and judging just about every political and social scheme, every artistic and literary current, that has made the contemporary world what it is. Extending his exploration beyond the concerns of the British, he has taken in the issues of the world community—everything from justice for minorities to poverty in the third world to how people think about history, progress, and rights.

The territory that he marks off for study —"our age," the generation that came of age and made its contributions between 1919-1951—is actually only part of his inquiry. As a historian of ideas and a sociologist of intellectuals, he goes back to the Edwardians and Victorians and comes forward to the era of student radicals, hard-nosed Thatcherites, and postmodernists of every stamp. Why and in what ways did British intellectuals between the wars reject tradition? What are the complex effects that flow from the minds of men and women who mocked the idea of the gentleman, the public schools, the ideal of duty, the conventional precepts and pieties of a thousand-year-old civilization?

Annan's approach to intellectual controversy is a subtle blend of recollection, biographical sketching, and tracing of background materials in philosophy, political thought, and styles of living. He is perhaps the foremost practitioner of a kind of history that characterizes minds, places them in broader contexts, and yet never neglects the ticks, crankiness, and "crooked timber of humanity" in subjects. The latter phrase—lately appropriated from Kant by Isaiah Berlin for his new book—conveys the sense that thinkers' theories and plans can never straighten out human nature, whether the philosopher's own or in the world he contemplates. Annan gives pride of place among intellectuals of his generation to Berlin, a historian who believes that good ends sometimes conflict, that truth is not unitary, and that aggressive claims for liberty and freedom can lead crooked-timbered human beings down the road to serfdom.

A skeptic, an admirer of Machiavelli, Hume, Halifax the Trimmer (a seventeenth-century man who changed his mind about the Stuarts), Noel Annan is suspicious of solutions, saviors, ideologues, and all-or-nothing system builders. Like Berlin, he admires tolerance, compromise, and the intellect seasoned by contact with very different books and experiences. He moves between personalities and impersonal forces, neither staying with the Great Men interpretation of history nor wholly rejecting it—like many of his contemporaries—for a Germanic or French faith in class struggles, forces, and material circumstances as determinants of events. Too analytic and forceful to descend to mere anecdotes about thinkers, he nevertheless brings their memorable phrases and quirks into a torrential story of war, social change, and disaster.

Among his subjects are Oxbridge historians and philosophers, wits and essayists, policymakers, and creative artists. Each group is measured against its avowed principles, but also against Annan's own criteria. Did these people—Keynes or literary dons or philosophers of law—influence "us" for better or worse? Is a thinker honest and honorable as well as interesting in the history of ideas? Annan organizes his book around large themes that subsume



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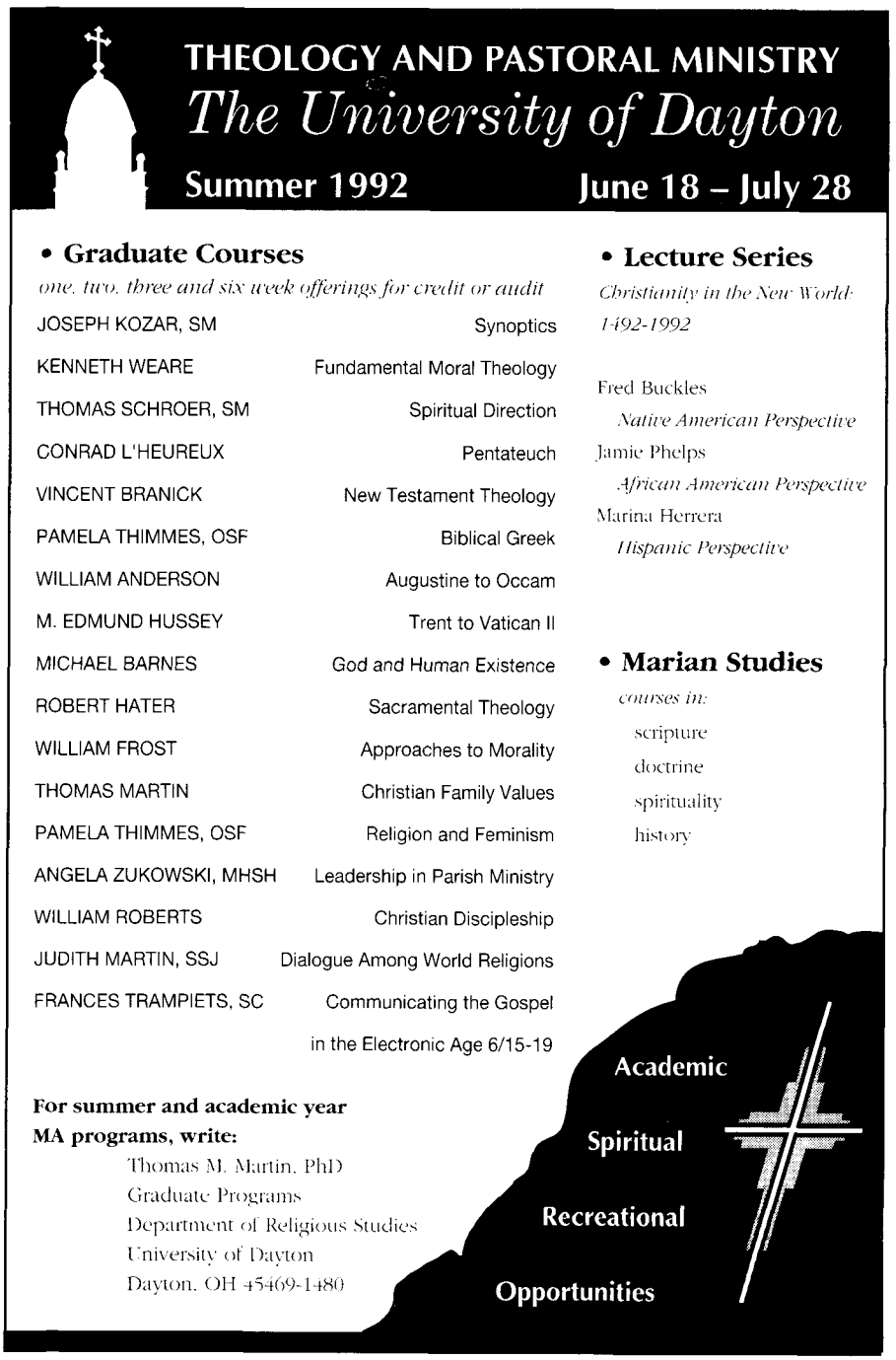
his portraits—modernism, pacifism, changes in manners and morals, perceptions of ideologies like Marxism, or of events like the Spanish Civil War. But he also uses certain chapters to focus on out-of-step figures. While the conventional iconoclasm stood for an austere and rebellious modernist style in literature, a stripping away of conventions in politics, a championing of intimacy and sexual liberation, a "deviant" like Evelyn Waugh believed in strange things like sin, hierarchical society, and the cruel paradoxes of living; another deviant, F.R. Leavis, sat in "our" midst at Cambridge and preached against aestheticism, self-indulgence, and idle wit. Annan's third idiosyncratic figure, the philosopher Michael Oakeshott, taught and wrote against the grain, urging intellectuals to question rationalism and to throw away one of their favorite ideas—that the university might become a service station for every social need and a staging area for change.

Meanwhile, Annan's contemporaries went about changing almost everything. They hated authority and its neat explanations, turning to their impulses and to novels and poems that were free of the conventions of form and the emphasis on didactic subject matter. While going abstract in the arts, they scorned the unexamined life of our forebears. A gift for mockery—learned from Bloomsbury—was only part of the dismissive attitude toward received ideas. Honor, country, and even sound credit and private enterprise were most often considered for fuddy-duddys, vulgarians in the market, nannies, and arrogant aristocrats. Better to betray your country than your friends, E.M. Forster mused. And with this half-baked idea about personal integrity, related as it is to G.E. Moore's notion that only artistic sensations and pleasurable friendships are important, Annan takes hold of his major theme in the book: the morality of abstract thinking, the responsibility of the intellectually gifted who, often to their embarrassment, enjoy the privileges of the haute bourgeoisie.

What consequences does theorizing entail? What ideas should be taken into the street and acted upon? Like Matthew Arnold, Lord Annan is scathing about the dark impulse to act violently in defense of a perhaps good cause. Several extended passages in the book are gracefully ironic about "enlightened" intolerance, imbalance, and the desire to reform the world. Although he is also witty and mocking about the repressions and priggishness of the public schools and the life of his father's generation, he is essentially in cool pursuit of those who find that "moral indignation is the supreme joy in life." The Cambridge spies come across not as people of principle but as scoundrels who have forgotten that one's country is one's friends, is indeed a whole network of civilizing relationships. Annan goes hard on Graham Greene for picturing Kim Philby as a valiant freedom fighter, a twentieth-century equivalent of a brave Continental Jesuit infiltrating the tyrannical realm of Elizabeth I. He also comes down on thinkers who give the nod to a younger generation trying to dismantle the universities. Annan favors students who can be found in libraries and labs rather than at demonstrations. And yet his intellectual gallantry makes him admire genuine



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chance-takers and martyrs, for example the noble John Cornford, a poet and radical activist at Trinity, who died in his early twenties in the Spanish Civil War. Annan's most admirable characteristic is his ability to derive sustenance from those with whom he can't quite agree. Against loose talk posing as social philosophy, Annan offers a brave defense of pluralism and order.

Annan's search for principles of order in the thought of his generation leads him to Bernard Williams, a philosopher who embraces Aristotle's *Ethics*, and a magnanimous man with a fixed character based on honesty and fear of debasing himself out of self-interest. Williams speaks of "thick concepts" like mercy and scrupulousness, the mainstays of civic virtue. Annan is not cynical: he finds that many of his contemporaries—whether they knew it or not, whether they agreed with him or not—embodied such ideals. With thinkers like Annan around—and with so many younger people who also sparked his thought—it's hard to worry about Britain's decline.

GREAT CASE, DULL STORY

MAKE NO LAW
The Sullivan Case and the First Amendment
Anthony Lewis
Random House, $25, 354 pp.

Francis Flaherty

"Heed Their Rising Voices," said the full-page ad in the *New York Times* of March 29, 1960. Taking its title from a recent editorial in the newspaper, the ad praised Southern black students who were fighting for civil rights and urged their protection from a segregationist "wave of terror."

Writers and readers of the ad knew it spoke to the preeminent issue of their time. They had no inkling, though, that it marked the start of a second epic battle, one also at the heart of the country: free speech.

But so it did. The ad triggered politically motivated libel suits by several Alabama officials, including one L.B. Sullivan, a city commissioner in Montgomery. The law took its stately course and, four years later, in *New York Times* v. *Sullivan*, a unanimous Supreme Court revolutionized the law of free speech. Technically, the Court imposed new evidentiary and procedural rules on libel suits brought by public officials. More broadly, the Justices bestowed great protections on the press from powerful politicians; made possible the investigative mode of journalism used during the Vietnam war and the Watergate scandal; and gave the Court's imprimatur to the Madisonian theory of the First Amendment —that the core aim of the provision is to ensure the free and unfettered political discourse that is the *sine qua non* of democracy.

New York Times columnist Anthony Lewis has written an adequate book about this landmark case. He portrays well the tense times that produced it, and he demonstrates convincingly its great importance.

By libel, lawyers mean an actionable falsehood that injures someone's reputation. But, while that was the legal assertion of the Southern politicians piqued by the *Times* ad, that is hardly what the case was about. Lewis ably argues:

> The aim was to discourage not false but true accounts of life under a system of white supremacy: stories about men being lynched for trying to vote, about cynical judges using the law to suppress constitutional rights, about police chiefs turning attack dogs on men and women who wanted to drink a Coke at a department store lunch counter. It was to scare the national press—newspapers, magazines, the television networks—off the civil rights story.

And scare the press it surely did. For legal reasons, the *Times* kept correspondents out of Alabama for a year after the Sullivan suit was filed. And when the Montgomery commissioner won $500,000 from a friendly Alabama jury, the *Times* swallowed hard. That was a princely sum then, and the *Times* was not rich. Worse, there were a slew of other libel suits pending over the ad, with a collective $3 million claimed in damages. Meanwhile, CBS and other news enterprises were similarly sued for their civil rights coverage and, within a few years, Southern officials had lodged a daunting $300 million in libel suits against the media.

In short, the suits were a savage strategy to silence the press. Had they worked—and the chances looked good they would—the civil rights movement might have stopped or slowed. Libel was solely a state concern at the time; indeed, in a memo to *Times* employees early in the case, one of the paper's lawyers didn't even mention the First Amendment as a possible defense. To persuade the Supreme Court—always chary about treading on state sovereignty—to change this venerable rule would take compelling vision and great lawyering.

But that's exactly what the *Times* got in Herbert Wechsler, Marvin Frankel, and other members of its legal team. Reaching deep into our traditions, unearthing basic but half-forgotten principles, the lawyers found a way to convince the high court that the Southerners' libel gambit was fundamentally antithetical to the nation's most cherished values. Swayed, the Supreme Court spoke in its 1964 opinion of "a profound national commitment to the principle that debate on public issues should be uninhibited, robust, and wide-open." In measured and majestic terms, the Court then did the unthinkable: it constitutionalized

REVIEWERS

ELIZABETH BEVERLY *is a writer and ethnographer who teaches at Lewis and Clark College in Portland, Oregon.*

DAVID CASTRONOVO *is professor of English at Pace University of New York, and author of* Edmund Wilson *and* The American Gentleman *(Continuum).*

FRANCIS FLAHERTY *is a New York-based writer specializing in legal issues.*

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libel law. Bringing libel under the mantle of the First Amendment, the Court recognized the critical connection James Madison saw between free speech and self-governance, and conferred on libel procedures protections commensurate with that vital nexus.

Sullivan ushered in a new era for the Constitution and for the press. Its doctrine has been expanded and refined through the years, and criticized too, as lawyers and journalists try to find ways to streamline the complex and somewhat intrusive procedural requirements of the case. But its importance is undisputed.

New York Times columnist Anthony Lewis can write good stories about great cases. One need only turn to *Gideon's Trumpet*, his powerful account of a 1963 Supreme Court ruling about the right to counsel. Anyone who can turn a potentially arid legal discussion into a masterful story and a Hollywood movie (starring Henry Fonda, no less) is doubtless a deft craftsman.

And so, with optimism, I turned to *Make No Law. New York Times* v. *Sullivan* seems a natural for a good read. It is a bright star in the First Amendment firmament, a bulwark of press freedom. Its cast includes a great newspaper, Southern segregationists, civil rights leaders, and constitutional scholars. Its main themes, free speech and civil rights, are two of the defining subjects of the republic.

But appearances can be deceiving. While the case may make for high drama on the stage of history, it simply is not the stuff of a good tale. Thus, to dramatize the undramatic, Mr. Lewis is forced to expand on the unexceptional. For example, one chapter details the differences among the eight drafts of Justice Brennan's Supreme Court opinion: "Eleven days later, on February 17, Justice Brennan circulated a third draft among his colleagues...." Or: "On March 3, Justice Brennan circulated a fifth draft of his opinion ...." Hardly edge-of-the-seat stuff.

Sometimes these contrivings just seem silly: "Justice Brennan interrupted to say, 'I am sorry; I am having difficulty hearing you.' This was unusual, and perhaps a sign of unusual attentiveness to this case." Yes. Or perhaps it was a sign that, well, Justice Brennan was having difficulty hearing. Mr. Lewis also takes us on forays into First Amendment history so extended that this reader wondered if we would ever return to the case that the title promised was the subject of the book.

The volume is serviceable, but these defects make reading it very rough going. The problem is a common one in legal literature: Cases that make great law don't always make great stories. In *Gideon's Trumpet* Mr. Lewis had that rare find, a case that was both. But with *New York Times* v. *Sullivan*, he would have been better advised to write a thematic essay.

CORRESPONDENCE

(Continued from page 2)

To illustrate, one loses the right to make an absolute disposition of one's estate and assumes the burden of responsibility for one's spouse. The tax advantage is minimal, if it exists at all. That's the reason why a number of our young people elect not to marry. Analyzing marriage as purely an economic union, they conclude that the economic disadvantages of marriage exceed the benefits.

The homosexual community seeks not some illusory economic advantage from marrying. They seek the social acceptance of homosexuality which they are convinced marriage would confer. Common historical wisdom tells us that social acceptance of sodomy is unwise. JOHN P. HALE

Finding a scapegoat

Piedmont, Calif.

To the Editors: The argument against gay marriage isn't really that at all; it's deeper than that. This argument is really about heterosexual unwillingness to accept the fact of gay and lesbian people who are not sick, who are not immoral, who are not child molesters, and who (contrary to your editorial) don't choose their homosexuality any more than others choose their heterosexuality.

There is also a tremendous amount of heterosexual discomfort with the knowledge that their sons/daughters/sisters/brothers/fathers/mothers are sometimes lesbians or gays. The argument is, finally,

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a search for a scapegoat for the fragility of the nuclear family in late twentieth-century Western society and the inability to moralize and legislate it back into "Ozzie and Harriet-hood."

The great majority of gays and lesbians, particularly those with religious convictions, do not deprecate the nuclear family, or devalue the mother/father/children arrangement for propagating the species, or denigrate the supporting, loving, and stabilizing form of family into which most (but far from all) of them were born.

Doesn't it seem quite odd these days that, at least from within the Catholic church, some of the strongest, most sincere voices asking to be included, to be recognized, are those of the church's gay and lesbian children who, in spite of all pressures to the contrary (from both the Catholic and homosexual communities) have kept the faith and see value and meaning in the sacraments? I know of few Catholic lesbian or gay couples who would want the church to formally recognize their unions just to please their parents, take advantage of a pretty setting, or have a reception and receive lots of gifts. I've witnessed enough farcical "matrimonies" to know that many parents of heterosexual children cannot say the same.

The future of marriage will be insured by those who enter into the contract. The larger religious and secular societies have nothing to gain by trying to blame others for wanting to have their own contracts recognized, validated, and sacramentalized.

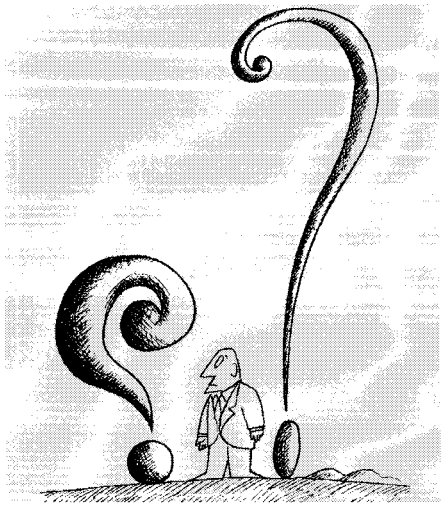
JIM McCREA

Outreach to youth

Sterling Heights, Mich.

To the Editors: I wonder about the veracity of your claim that marriage is not denied to homosexuals to oppress them, but to uphold the social goods of the regenerative family. Reducing sexuality to (physical) procreation is as obscene as the pornographer reducing sexuality to lust. Both are reductions to the physical, and both are equally limited perspectives on sexuality.

Related to this is the plight of adolescents



who discover themselves to be gay or lesbian. What role model can their heterosexual parents and family offer? Most often these youths cannot talk about their feelings with their parents. As a rule gay and lesbian teens feel isolated, alone, and cursed by their difference. Struggle over sexual orientation is a leading cause of teen suicide. A major concern of most gay organizations is outreach to youth—not for sexual purposes, as some believe, but to offer them a sense of community, family, and support where none is offered them.

Clearly a commitment to gay marriage would offer tangible models, a sense of identity and belonging for young people. Is this not a constitutive feature of generativity? Familial concern for those who cannot reproduce themselves is an argument for, not against, gay and lesbian marriage.

RANDALL R. PHILLIPS

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To all, Associates and desktoppers, best Season's wishes and warmest thanks!

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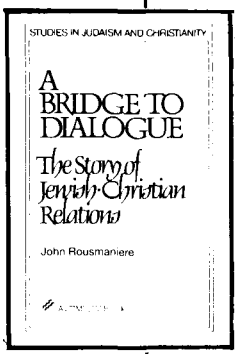

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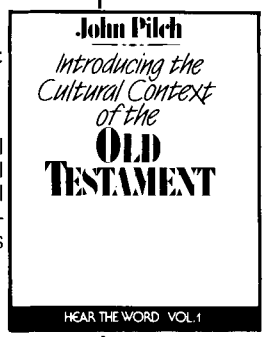

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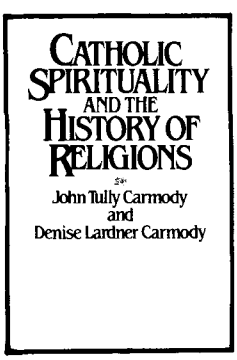

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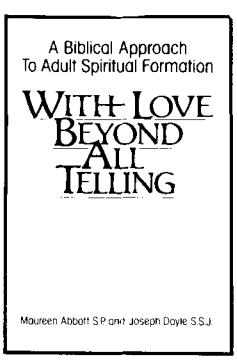

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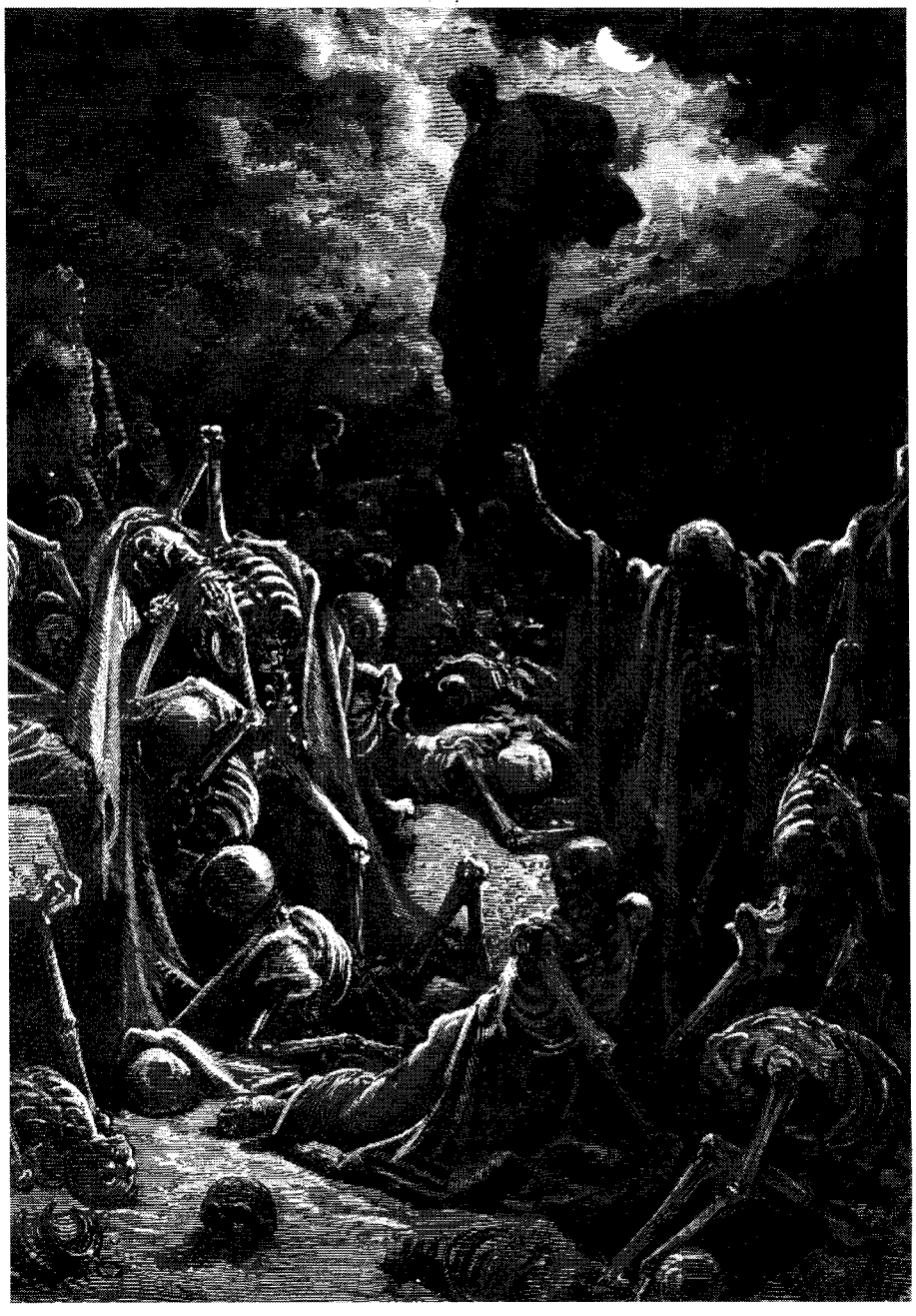
DAMNATION JUST ISN'T WHAT IT USED TO BE



Current discussions about young Catholics suggest that Catholic leaders are less concerned with our welfare than with the well-being of the church generally. This is a natural consequence of the Second Vatican Council's revised understanding of the church, and its corresponding revision of the nature of salvation. If you see the church chiefly as the body of its people, and not chiefly as, say, a divine agency appointed by God to do his saving work on earth, your in-house evangelizing efforts will be less menacing but also somewhat less compelling.... Your sense that Catholicism isn't taking hold on the younger end leads you to think not of souls lost for eternity, but of the church losing its vigor in the here and now. Because you can't get all that worked up about young people going to hell, you mostly worry that if you fail to sponsor a Catholic identity in them, the religion you've known will go out of this corner of the world, and the kids will have missed out on something grand.

—Paul Elie,
"On Young Catholics & the Church"
Commonweal, September 27, 1991

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